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THE

HISTORY OF SUNDAY-SCHOOLS:

A BRIEF HISTORICAL TREATISE,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS OF AMERICA.

BY W. A. CANDLER.

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GEORGIA.



DEDICATED

TO

MY MOTHER, MRS. MARTHA BEALL CANDLER

ONE OF THE FOUNDERS

OF THE

FIRST SUNDAY-SCHOOL

I EVER SAW.

PREFACE.

IN the spring of the year 1879 I was invited to address a Sunday-School Convention on the "History of Sunday-Schools." Supposing that in their endless book-making men had not overlooked so conspicuous and so interesting a subject, and that one would experience no difficulty in obtaining a treatise concerning it, I accepted the invitation. As the time for the fulfillment of my engagement approached, and I began to look about me for the material for such a discussion, to my surprise and disappointment I could find no work upon the subject. I made diligent but fruitless search in public and in private libraries. I examined with the greatest possible care the book catalogues of the leading American publishers, but all to no avail. Betaking myself to the cyclopedias and to kindred publications, I was enabled to collect some facts with which, by the aid of a frank

confession, I discharged my promise. It was then suggested to me that I use the material already gathered, and other matter which I might be able to obtain, in the preparation of a work upon the subject. This little book, which you hold in your hand, is the result of that suggestion; and this bit of personal history contains my apology for adding another volume to the books of the world.

I am sincere in declaring my consciousness of its imperfections. It has had no predecessor for a model, and deserves some consideration of criticism from this fact. If it shall call forth a successor more worthy of the great subject, the chief motive of its publication will have been satisfied, and it will gladly retire from the field to give place to such a work. It has come out in answer to call; it will not remain longer than its mission demands.

W. A. C.

February 1, 1880.

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THE HISTORY OF SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

TO write the history of an institution is difficult. Men are born, and the day of their births and the events of their lives are easily ascertained. So also governments have well-marked beginnings and distinct periods. But great enterprises, and especially great moral enterprises, are accretions arising from invisible forces, and almost imperceptibly attaining their full magnitude. These remarks apply with especial pertinency to the Sunday-school. It is the confluent result of contributions from nearly every age of the world. To trace to its true and final source such a stream is not an easy task. What seems its head, upon close examination, is often found to be but a basin excavated

by favorable circumstances, into which the waters from rivulets above have poured and spread themselves into lake-like form. Essaying to proceed, the explorer is frequently confronted with the almost insoluble question as to which is the main stream and which the tributaries. Like the first explorers of the Mississippi, he is then in danger of giving to the main stream the name of a secondary current, and to dignify some minor branch with the name of the "father of waters."

There is a point, at which he ultimately arrives, where a thousand energetic springs spout up, and he finds it impossible to select from them any one worthy of pre-eminence upon his map. He is, therefore, driven to begin where the waters of all these fountains mingle into one stream, and to this one, though small, he gives the same name as that of the full-grown river.

It is beyond question true, that the emphatic and comprehensive command to the ancient Israelites to "gather the people together, men, women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and

fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law," is one of the springs of the Sunday-school movement. Their obedience to the command furnished, doubtless, some of the earliest illustrations of the Sunday-school idea. The schools of the prophets were, perhaps, others of the same kind. It may be that this resistless tide, which flows so usefully through our own times, has gotten an impulse from a point even as high up in the mountains of antiquity as the patriarchal age. It is possible, that could we know all the facts of the case, one of its springs might be found gurgling from under the altar upon which the first fallen pair offered the sacrifice which reminded of sin and prefigured a Saviour.

But these numerous waters broke not into one continuous flow until the establishment of a Church by Him who discoursed so lovingly about the water of life to the thirsty Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. When, rebuking the impatient disciples, he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," he incorporated the Sunday-school germ

in the constitution of the future Church. When he twice exhorted Peter to "Feed my lambs," he emphasized it. When the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles and guided the early Christians, so that in establishing the Church they "every-where erected schools" for the purpose of teaching on the Sabbath day to the children the knowledge of their Saviour, the Sunday-school was first founded. Then all the streams from the Mosaic law and the prophetic schools, which had been swallowed up by the hungry soil of a parched religious era, burst forth into renewed vigor and went on their fertilizing way. Since then, with varying fortune, the current has moved onward. For centuries it often seems an underground stream; but just as we begin to fear that it has been lost forever, we see it far off from where we last observed it, bursting forth again and babbling on its silvery course. Sometimes we find the waters so corrupted by the muddy influx of secular influences that we question whether it is indeed the same stream. A close observation of its course and scrutiny of its contents convinces us, however, that it is the same,

and we proceed. After awhile we come up with the moving tide of the majestic river that is cutting so broad a channel through these modern days, and looking back from the last plunge it makes over the shoals and barriers of our times, to where the feeble rivulet wound its way through the apostolic age, we see it is one continuous current.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THE intimations of the preceding chapter, and the caption of this, may provoke the surprise and incredulity of many readers. They will at once demand, "Did the primitive Church know of any such enterprise as the Sunday-school? Is it not a thing of comparatively recent invention?" There are many learned people, we reply, who think that it is a modern institution. Many equally as learned do not so think, and it is with the latter that we agree. The most of the Christian world have found it easier to credit the popular opinion that Robert Raikes was its founder than to examine the justice of the claim. We have not so found it, and we have been constrained by well-authenticated facts to classify Mr. Raikes with the revivalists of the world, instead of with its inventors.

It is true that the Sunday-school of primitive

times was not called by that name. It is not the *name* but the *thing* whose history we seek to record. The Church was not then called the *Church*, but the *Ekklesia*. He did not, therefore, originate the Church who first gave it an Anglo-Saxon appellation. It is also true that the Sunday-school of the early Church was vastly different from the enterprise whose projection is commonly ascribed to Robert Raikes. Yet it is strictly true that it did not differ from the school of Raikes as much as did that of Raikes differ from the Sunday-school of the present time.

The dissimilarity is not greater than that which exists between the full-blown flowers of summer and the first buds of spring.

Yea, verily, the early Church had genuine Sunday-schools. Mosheim says the Christians of the first century "took all possible care to accustom their children to the study of the Scriptures, and to instruct them in the doctrines of their holy religion; and schools were every-where erected for this purpose, even from the very commencement of the Christian Church." It is doubtless true that before

many of these schools the aged Apostle John delivered his speech which, tradition says, he went about speaking, namely, "Little children, love one another."

From all the records at our hand we learn of these primitive Sunday-schools the following facts:

"From the first organization of the Christian Churches the custom prevailed of assembling the children, and those who, professedly receiving Christianity, were not as yet fully instructed in its doctrines, on the first day of the week for Christian instruction." This, it will be seen, was nearer our Sunday-school than that of Raikes; for his school only received the ignorant children who were poor, but the primitive school received all the ignorant.

It was impossible for the pastors to teach all that came to these schools, and so they became their superintendents to an extent, appointing the deacons and other proper persons to be the teachers. These instructors were called catechists, and those whom they instructed catechumens; and to this day the Sunday-school is often, very properly, called the catechumenical institution of the Church.

The instruction was, for the most part, oral, and consisted chiefly of expositions of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and some creed or confession of faith. Again we have to observe, that the primitive Sunday-school was more nearly like our own than that of Robert Raikes, because the instruction was more exclusively religious. It is well known that the instruction of the Sunday-school of the Raikes period was of a very secular complexion.

The schools of the fathers were conducted in buildings set apart for the purpose in the neighborhood of the churches, very much as some of our Sunday-schools are now furnished with rooms. These were no hired houses, as were those used by the Sunday-school revivalists contemporary with and immediately preceding the Raikes schools.

The office of a catechist was justly considered highly honorable, and for the discharge of its functions the most eminent talents and qualifications were esteemed necessary. It was not considered that a person destitute of piety, negligent of study, or wanting in gifts, was fitted for such a high and

holy office. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that these teachers were never the objects of the world's jest. Men whose piety and ability could no more be questioned than the sanctity of their office could be doubted were the Sunday-school teachers of this age.

Clement was the superintendent of the school at Alexandria. Origen, who subsequently became a catechist in the same school, was one of his pupils. Before they were invested with full ministerial authority, Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom, and others of the fathers, were engaged in the labors of the catechetical office, and it must be confessed that such use of a candidate for the ministry before his consecration was one of the wisest of policies.

The most remarkable feature of these Sunday-schools was that they had a term of instruction and a graduation. The term was of three years' duration, and at its expiration the catechumen was expected to receive baptism and become a member of the Church. This, however, did not exist from the first, but was introduced later, when the making of

members of Churches became more conspicuous than the making of Christians. It led to the corruption of the *catechumena*, by the introduction of arbitrary rules and superstitious ceremonies. But while there is condemnation to be awarded to a plan of this kind, it is to be feared that we sin in the opposite extreme. There is in our time a species of Sunday-school teaching that is never conscious of any desire, if, indeed, it ever possesses such a purpose, to lead the pupils to conversion and into the Church.

We have just noted that the introduction of this vicious term-plan began the corruption and destruction of the primitive Sunday-schools. There was another thing of a decidedly *virtuous* nature, which finally robbed them of their Sunday-school character, namely, extending religious instruction to other days of the week. Religious discussions were the great themes of ancient schools. This was true with Jews and Gentiles, Christians and heathen. Plato and Socrates and Gamaliel and all, taught religion. That was the day when the heart of man, unhardened by chilly materialism,

studied, with an absorbing interest, spiritual things. If secular information was imparted, it was because it contributed directly or indirectly to spiritual knowledge. Men did not talk dreamily and incoherently of culture, and fall down and worship the dimly-defined deity. Hence the week-day schools and the Sunday-schools became almost, if not quite, identical. This was also true of the school of Raikes, with this difference, that the primitive Church carried religious instruction into the day-school, and Raikes brought secular instruction into the Sunday-school. For the difference of method in equalizing the courses of study of the day-schools and the Sabbath-schools the world has robbed the early Christians of their honor to give it to Raikes. So much for doing things in a popular way, and at a favorable time.

These schools were continued, at least, until the eighth century. They were, however, finally abandoned entirely, unless it may be they were preserved by the Waldenses and the Culdees. Occasional efforts were made to revive them, but such efforts were not permanently successful. The

strong arm of an arrogant and corrupt ecclesiasticism now drove the stream into subterranean channels. Occasionally it comes to the surface, but it remains but for a moment. Finally it comes forth in conspicuous force, bursting all barriers with the upheavals of the Reformation.

CHAPTER III.

THE MIDDLE AGES OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL HISTORY.

BETWEEN the age of the primitive Sunday-school and the great Sunday-school revival of the time of Raikes there is a period which may very properly be called "The Middle Ages of Sunday-School History." It contains the Sunday-school work of the Waldenses, of the Culdees, of the time of Luther, etc. To this period we now come.

As was observed in the foregoing chapter, the primitive Church carried the religious instruction of the children and youth of its time into the day-schools as well as into the Sunday-schools. Following this example, such was the practice of the parties who continued the Sunday-school during this intermediate period. While the habit was one that we can but applaud, it gives rise to a difficulty in writing the history of Sunday-schools not easily surmounted. The difficulty is in separating be-

tween the history of their seminaries and the history of their Sunday-schools. However, if there arises this difficulty, it is nevertheless not without its compensations; for if it brings the danger of falling into certain minor errors and inaccuracies, it also secures us against any very considerable departure from the strictest certainty.

The Sunday-schools of this period dating furthest back are those of the Culdees. Unfortunately for the study of this interesting sect or order, the date of their extinction is so uncertain, and their character has been so sharply debated by the leaders of Presbyterianism on the one hand, and by the leaders of Episcopalianism on the other, that it is almost impossible to arrive at any very satisfactory conclusion concerning them. It is certain beyond all debate, however, that they had institutions for the instruction of the young on the Sabbath-day very similar to those of the first century of the Christian era. Their succession from apostolic Christianity was clearly not very remote, and upon eminent authority we conclude that they were as early as the second and third centuries the priests

of a Scottish Christian Church, very much resembling the Presbyterian organization. They had no bishops called as such, but their abbots exercised much the same prerogatives as the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Churches of America. They possessed many establishments in Scotland and in Ireland, and a few in England and Wales. Perhaps here is found the germ of the Presbyterianism of Scotland. Certainly the Presbyterians preserve to this day, in a pre-eminent degree, two of the chief features of the Culdees, namely, the strict observance of the Sabbath, and the right rearing of children. It is the resultant force of these two principles which makes a Sunday-school. So the Culdees had such schools, and so they continued them to a period as late as the tenth century, or perhaps later. It is not known when they became extinct. So gradual was the development, perhaps to higher and purer forms of Christianity, that the historian marked not the stages nor the completion of the transformation.

In the twelfth century we find Sunday-schools among those brave Christian people, the Waldenses.

Of the character of their Sunday-schools we know nothing more than that God's word was the principal, if not the only, text-book. But this is enough to know to do them immortal honor and inspire our hearts with profound reverence for them.

After this we find a broad chasm of three hundred years in which no Sunday-schools are known to history. Beyond a doubt there were pious people who still preserved the apostolic enterprise. But circumstances of obscurity, or the secrecy made necessary for safety, have conspired to keep them out of the chronicles of man. No historian can ever tell the story of their devotion, or mark the line of legacy of the pure word of God, transmitted from one generation to another in this way. The familiarity with which willing hands turned to the work whenever the hand of persecution was stayed, shows, however, that there was such a transmission, and we shall know the truth of the story when we shall hear the record kept by Him, who has long since "wiped away all tears from the eyes" of his saints of these times.

God's truth may be suppressed for a while, but

there is omnipotent energy deposited in the leaven. Sooner or later its permeative power will inevitably swell the lump to the bursting of all bands. Three hundred years the noiseless stream pursued its underground way, fed and incremented by the sympathetic earth. Ultimately it burst forth in the Reformation of the sixteenth century with the "noise of many waters." As soon as God's word was unfettered, Christian activity began to crystallize into its natural forms. The instruction of the children on the Sabbath day returned. Numerous elementary treatises were written to aid pastors and their assistants in the religious education of children and youth.

Between the years 1521 and 1530 the heart and hands of Martin Luther were enlisted in this work. The fierce spirit of the old Reformer is fully betrayed in the following utterance on the subject. He says: "Of all outward sins, I think none greater before God, or *more punishable*, than even this which we commit in respect to children, in that we neglect their education." Agreeably to Luther's counsels," says Dr. Summers, "the Scriptures, catechism,

prayers, and sacred music were introduced into all the secular schools of Saxony, and Sunday-schools were established under the immediate care of the *day-school teachers* and the superintendence of the pastors." It is a fact which looks unmistakably in the direction of a uniform and unbroken, though hidden, line of practice from the apostles to the reformers that the positions of the Primitive Church, of the Culdees, of the Waldenses, and of Luther and his contemporaries in respect to secular and religious instruction are identically the same. Secular and religious instruction were not divorced from each other, but were carefully attended to *by the Church.*

In these Saxony Sunday-schools "the children went early on Sunday morning to the church service — then to the school-room for scriptural and catechetical lessons—then again at noon to public worship, except sometimes the younger children, who remained at the school-room to receive instruction adapted to their capacities; the older children were afterward examined on the sermon which they heard." A part at least of this programme has not been improved upon by modern Sunday-

school workers. The absence of the children from the church services has given some ground for the frequent inquiry, "Has not the Sunday-school wrought evil in this matter? Would it not be better to return to the days when our mothers carried us to church and compelled us to sit with them and hear the sermon, and at home afterward examined us upon the discourse?"

For these schools Luther, who, like the Wesleys, was no mean musician, composed hymns and tunes, being very desirous that the children should have the gospel sung to them as well as preached and taught to them, and that they should be so educated in sacred music as to be able to sing it to others.

In the following century Sunday-schools became more numerous than even in Luther's time. A few clergymen of the English Church established Sunday-schools in connection with their parishes. Notably among them was a Nonconformist clergyman, named Alleine, rector of Batcombe, in Somersetshire. He was a rigid Puritan, and was deprived of his rectory after the Restoration. He then preached in a private house. He published, in 1656, "An Explana-

tion of the Shorter Catechism," and labored zealously to promote the work of catechizing in Somersetshire and Wiltshire. In the mean time he and his wife conducted a Sunday-school at his lodgings in Bath.

On the Continent Philip Jakob Spener, in the year 1670, established Sunday-schools in connection with his work as a preacher. These were of an exceptionable character, and were, for the most part, limited to the explanation of any parts of his sermons which might be obscure to any of his hearers. These he called *collegia pietatis*, and from them, without any intention on his part, sprung the sect of the Pietists.

It was in the seventeenth century the first Sunday-school was established in America. It was in the year 1674, at a church in Roxbury, Massachusetts. The instruction here was confined chiefly to teaching the rudimentary branches to those deprived of an opportunity to acquire such knowledge during the week. Religious instruction was not, however, wholly omitted.

In the first part of the eighteenth century many

others were established at various points in Europe. It is not known that any other than the one at Roxbury was established in America until a much later date.

Thus, without any concert of action, but in "sporadic cases," as one has said of them, various workers in different parts of the world sowed the seed which resulted in the revival of Sunday-schools in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Or if any one should be unwiiling to grant them the honor of having sowed the seed, the most prejudiced man can but allow that they did much to prepare the soil.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

BESIDES those mentioned in the last chapter there were, during this intermediate period—"the middle ages of Sunday-school history"—certain other Sunday-schools in the world, conducted by Roman Catholics. To these we must turn our attention, and since they may be made to very cleverly introduce "the Sunday-schools of the Roman Catholics," we bring forward that chapter at this point.

In general terms Catholicism has not been favorable to Sunday-schools, and has only employed them where the compulsory proximity of Protestant Sunday-schools have constrained her to do so. In support of this remark we may cite the words of a leading and reliable cyclopedia: "Sunday-schools have never flourished in Roman Catholic countries. In France the Sunday-school has never prospered. Some Protestant Churches have schools,

and the efforts of the deaconesses of Strasbourg and Paris have been exerted with considerable success in their organization; but, except for secular instruction of artisans and others who have no opportunity of study during the week, there are few or none of them in connection with Catholic Churches. In Germany and the Scandinavian countries, under the vigorous efforts of Dr. Wichern and the members of the Inner Mission, they have within a few years past been extensively established. Italy, though claiming in the person of Borromeo to have been the home of the original institution, has very few Sunday-schools, and those few mainly in Sardinia or the States which have been longest annexed."

As said before, Catholic Sunday-schools exist only when and where Protestant zeal makes a counter movement necessary. For this cause, in 1584, in Germany, they were established under the auspices of the Archduke Ferdinand; and his son, Cardinal Andrew, had catechisms printed for the children. The Council of Trent decreed that upon Sundays and holidays there should be preaching in

the forenoon, and catechising in the afternoon. Before the Reformation they did neither, but afterward they manifested no small concern in the subject.

It will serve to show how this same spirit is still prevalent in the Romish Church to quote a paragraph from a letter written from Salerno, in Italy, by Rev. G. B. De Sanctis, to the Foreign Sunday-School Association of Brooklyn, in the autumn of 1877. He says: "We have suffered great persecution from the priests and bishops of the Roman Church, who do every thing to keep the children from attending the Sunday-school. The Romish priests have commenced a Sunday service, and attract the children to it by giving them sacred images, pictures, dolls, and confectionery."

Rome desires a Sunday-school because she is greedy of power. She wishes them no longer than they are necessary for the accomplishment and preservation of power. She aims at the advancement of her hierarchy, and not at the benefit of the children. For the accomplishment of such a base purpose, sacred images, made attractive by the com-

panionship of toys and confectionery, are infinitely better than a ministration of "the sincere milk of the word."

But in spite of this general spirit of opposition to Sunday-schools, which is and has been diffused throughout the Romish Church, there have appeared in its communion, from time to time, good men whose lives are inseparably connected with the history of this great educational and spiritual scheme. To pass them over without mentioning any of them would be to make an unpardonable chasm in this narrative, and deprive our readers of some most useful and stimulating accounts. We will devote, therefore, a few paragraphs to detailing the doings and methods of the most prominent of these Roman Catholic Sunday-school workers.

Among these may be mentioned Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, a man prominent for his purity, his truthfulness, and his disinterestedness. His theory was that every child belonged to the Church, and his practice was in keeping with his doctrine. His enthusiasm led him to a most liberal expenditure of money and labor in the establishment and ad-

vancement of Sunday-schools throughout his diocese. The course of study which he prescribed was reading, writing, and religious instruction. It was said of him that he knew but two streets in the city, that which led to the church and that which led to the school.

In 1699 De La Salle attached to his novitiate, in Paris, a Sunday-school for apprentices and other young persons under twenty years of age. The studies which he directed to be pursued were reading, arithmetic, drawing, the catechism, and Bible history. Certain Parisian teachers bitterly opposed him with a cry much akin in spirit to that of the Ephesian silversmiths, and after six years broke up his school. From Paris he subsequently went to Rome, Avignon, Marseilles, where he successfully engaged in similar labors. It was he who established the first normal school. In 1681 he bought a house and established a school for the instruction of teachers of girls' schools. The exercises in this institution consisted of mutual conferences, instruction from a master, and religious services. This great and good man, after giving birth to

these grand conceptions, and projecting without model or predecessor the important enterprise of a normal school, beautifully and appropriately closed his life by devoting his last days to the instruction of a class of little children. He died in 1685. Others might be mentioned, and there are doubtless some of whom History takes no account because she knew them not. But these will suffice for the purpose of this story. Of all others like-minded as these let it be said :—

> "By angel trump their praise is blown;
> Divine their art."

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT SUNDAY-SCHOOL REVIVAL OF THE TIME OF RAIKES.

IN the foregoing chapters the hypothesis has been assumed, and somewhat defended, that the Sunday-school is the result of an accretion of evangelical forces, and that although suffering various modifications in different periods, that it nevertheless is as old as apostolic times, and that it has preserved an unbroken identity through all the centuries. It is necessary in this chapter to defend this theory further, and to support it with the facts of the "great Sunday-school revival of the time of Raikes." We say "of the time of Raikes," not because we believe him to have been the first, even in his own time, to establish Sunday-schools, but because he is entitled to the prominence of having "said the thing so long and loud that he compelled mankind to hear him."

In preceding pages we have alluded to that class

of people who find it easier to believe a popular deception than to investigate its trustworthiness. We beg, at this point, if there be any such among our readers, that they will exercise themselves more in the interest of truth and correct information than in the indulgence of an easy self-delusion.

There is another class who become so wedded to a hoary error as to venerate it for its age, and to look upon any declarations to the contrary as suspicious assertions of doubtful credibility. Will such remember at this moment that an error is not less an error because it is antiquated, and that the world often, under circumstance in which information is difficult to obtain, falls upon a mistaken account and transmits it to posterity as the truth of history. America would to-day be called Columbia had this not been true. Columbus was industrious as a discoverer while his competitor was enterprising as a publisher.

Mistakes of this kind occur not only when men mean to deceive, but when they are honest in their statements. Originality in thought and in plan is a very rare thing, and often when men think they

are original they have the thought borrowed so long they have forgotten to whom it belongs. Goethe said: "Much is talked about originality, but what does originality mean? We are no sooner born than the world around begins to act upon us. Its action lasts to the end of our lives, and enters into every thing." He continues: "If I could enumerate all that I really owe to the great men who have preceded me, and to those of my own day, it would be seen that very little is my own." Canon Liddon, remarking upon the same idea, says: "In proportion to our consciousness of our real obligations to the general stock of mental wealth, must we not hesitate to presume that any one idea, the immediate origin of which we cannot trace, is in reality our own? Suppose that in this or that instance we do believe ourselves, in perfect good faith, to have produced the idea which is really entitled to the merit of originality. May it not be that if at the right moment we could have examined the intellectual air around us with a sufficiently powerful microscope, we should have detected the germ of our idea 'floating in upon our

personal thought from without?'"... "The idea, perhaps, was suggested indirectly; it came to us along with some other idea upon which our attention was mainly fixed; it came to us during the course of a casual conversation; or from a book, the very name of which we have forgotten; and our relationship to it, after all, has been that of a nurse, not that of a parent." These observations, the justice of which no one will gainsay, apply with intensified force to a case wherein we know the same germs to have been afloat, and the same ideas prevalent, before our time. Such is the case of Robert Raikes, and his claim to have been the originator of Sunday-schools. All the essential elements of the institution had been in existence from apostolic times. It was not, indeed, called by this name, but it was, in all essential respects, the identical institution. Who can say Mr. Raikes had never read any thing of the catechumenical schools, or that he had heard no "casual conversations," in which were mentioned the labors of Borromeo, De La Salle, or the wondrous work of Oberlin in the Ban de la Roche, or even of Mrs. Susannah Wesley's work at Ep-

worth? Who can deny (could even Mr. Raikes deny) that he had never read of Luther's Sunday-schools of Saxony? and Luther himself would admit that most of his methods he obtained from the practice of the primitive Church. Or, mayhap, the kindly winds of heaven had wafted some fruitful germs from the isle of Iona, where in the centuries before the Sunday-schools of the Culdees had flourished. Were the mountains so high as to shut in the story of the Waldensian Sunday-schools from the outside world? Nay, verily; the work of Raikes and of his contemporaries was a revival of an old institution, and not an invention of a new one. A fact of no small significance in the support of this theory is that about this time several men and women, remarkable for the fervency of their zeal, projected, without knowledge of each other, Sunday-school enterprises singularly similar to a common model, namely: the *catechumena* of the apostolic era.

If we have been at some pains to discuss the matter of originality, and have somewhat elaborated the application of the idea to this subject, it

has been because we desired to harmonize with a theory of honesty the professions of Mr. Raikes as to the origin of Sunday-schools, and not because we distrusted our theory of the case.

While we have felt that the facts would not permit us to credit these revivalists with being inventors, still we are not disposed to underrate their work. They did much to adjust the ancient machinery to the needs of their own and succeeding times. Newcombe invented the steam-engine, but we cannot overestimate the work of the laborious Watt, or of Trevithick, the Cornish miner, or of George Stevenson, the colliery engine-man. So no true history of Sunday-schools can overstate the value of the work done by Raikes and his contemporaries. Let us reverently uncover our heads while we recount their deeds.

The first of these deserves to be mentioned—the Sunday-school of Rev. John Wesley, which he established in his parish at Savannah, Georgia, certainly as early as 1736. Mr. Delamotte, a gentleman who came to Georgia along with Oglethorpe and Wesley, was of great assistance in the establish-

ment of this school, and continued it after Wesley returned to England. The features of the school were of the most apostolic pattern, and the success of it was wonderful—a revival of great power, beginning among the children and pervading the whole Church, being one of its immediate fruits.

The next of these in order of time should be placed the name of this great man's mother, Mrs. Susannah Wesley, who, about the year 1765, fifteen years before the Sunday-school of Mr. Raikes, established a Sunday-school in the parish of Epworth, of which her husband was rector. The nature and methods of her school were very much the same as that of Mr. Raikes, being, however, somewhat more religious. It is highly probable that she drew her ideas from the plans of her gifted son or from the customs of the primitive Church, having the library of an English clergyman from which to derive her information. Her plans were not adopted elsewhere, as were those of Mr. Raikes, because she had no newspaper to publish or propagate them.

While this godly woman, in her quiet way, was

working at Epworth, a young man away over in the Vosges Mountains was projecting similar enterprises. Jean Frederic Oberlin succeeded, in the year 1667, Stouber, to the pastorate of the Ban de la Roche. He found the people poor, ignorant, and idle, speaking for a language a barbarous *patois*. His young and fervent heart burned for their improvement. His vigorous brain was ceaselessly busy in devising plans for the accomplishment of the purpose. His prolific mind, fired by his holy zeal, brought forth in rapid succession the infant school, the Sunday-school, and the asylum for homeless, helpless children. And although similar institutions had been previously devised elsewhere, there is conclusive evidence that he did not borrow the idea from any of his *contemporaries*. From the barren waste and moral desert that it was, he converted this rude district to a garden of great beauty and fruitfulness.

These, and perhaps others, of whom the world will never know in time, existed before the school of Robert Raikes, but they were of a local character, and rarely, if ever, survived their zealous

founders. It was reserved by Providence for one in the position of an editor to give the struggling idea a world-wide prevalence. This is the great work of Robert Raikes, and is his contribution to the broad and fertilizing stream which sweeps majestically through our times. The facilities of his place, and the conjunctions of Providence, furnished a rare opportunity for the diffusion of the plan. How well he met this opportunity the world knows, and in the deathless honor done his name declares. Of the origin of his efforts and the method of his procedure let him tell. This he does in a letter addressed to Colonel Townley, and published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" of London, a copy of which is here inserted:

"GLOUCESTER, *June* 5, 1784.

"The *utility* of an establishment of this sort was first suggested by a group of miserable little wretches, whom I observed one day in the street where many people employed in the pin manufactory reside. I was expressing my concern to one at their forlorn and neglected state, and was told that if I were to pass through that street upon

Sundays it would shock me indeed to see the crowds of children who were spending that sacred day in noise and riot, to the extreme annoyance of all decent people. I immediately determined to make some little effort to remedy the evil. Having found four persons who had been accustomed to instruct children, I engaged to pay the sum they required for receiving and instructing such children as I should send to them every Sunday morning. The children were to come soon after ten in the morning and stay till twelve; they were then to go home and return at one, and after reading a lesson they were to be conducted to church. After church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half-past five, and then to be dismissed with an injunction to go home without making a noise, and by no means to play in the street. This was the general outline of the regulations.

"ROBERT RAIKES."

"Shortly after Mr. Raikes had started his half-organized school at Gloucester, Mr. Fletcher determined to introduce Sunday-schools in his own

parish." "The animus of the system is exhibited in the plan which he devised for his schools—the oldest Sunday-school constitution with which we are acquainted.

I. "It is proposed that Sunday-schools be set up in this parish for such children as are employed all the week, and for those whose education has been hitherto neglected.

II. "That the children admitted into these be taught reading, writing, and the principles of religion.

III. "That there be a school for boys and an other for girls in Madeley, Madeley-wood, and Col brookdale—six in all.

IV. "That a subscription be opened to pay each teacher one shilling per Sunday, and to buy tables, forms, books, pens, and ink.

V. "That two treasurers be appointed to ask and receive the contributions of the subscribers.

VI. "That whoever subscribes a guinea a year shall be a governor.

VII. "That three or four inspectors be appointed, who are to visit the schools once a week to see

that the children attend regularly and the masters do their duty.

VIII. "That a book be provided for setting down all receipts and expenses, and another for the names of the teachers and scholars.

IX. "That the scholars be solemnly visited once or twice a year, and a premium given to the children that have made the greatest improvement."

In 1783 Bishop Francis Asbury organized a Sunday-school in Hanover County, Virginia; and in 1797 Samuel Slater established one in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

We have now arrived at a period when the map of the world becomes so dotted with Sunday-schools that we can no longer specify and describe the work of individuals, but must consider only the efforts of great societies and Churches. And yet there is one other whose name and whose labors cannot with propriety be omitted. In the year 1793 Katy Ferguson, a poor African woman, with no knowledge of Raikes or other Sunday-schools, established the first Sunday-school in New York city. As early as 1791 there was a school in that

place devoted to purposes of secular instruction on Sunday, and it was from this, perhaps, that she got the suggestion of the school, to which she gave a more spiritual complexion. "She hath done what she could." Thank God for the dusky hands which broke here an alabaster box the perfume of which still lingers about the great metropolis!

NOTE.—After this chapter was written our attention was directed to the following note from Buckle's "History of Civilization in England," vol. i, p. 309.

"It is usually supposed that Sunday-schools were begun by Raikes in 1781, but though he appears to have been the first to organize them on a suitable scale, there is no doubt that they were established by Lindsey in or immediately after 1765. See Cappe's 'Memoirs,' pp. 118, 122; Harford's 'Life of Burgess,' p. 92; Nichols's 'Lit. Anec.,' vol. iii, pp. 430, 431; vol. ix, p. 540; Chalmers' 'Biog. Dict.,' vol. xxv, p. 485; 'Journal of Stat. Soc.,' vol. x, p. 196; vol. xiii, p. 265; Hodgson's 'Life of Porteus,' p. 92. It is said in Spencer's 'Social Statics,' p. 343, that the clergy of the Church of England were as a body opposed to the establishment of Sunday-schools. (Compare Watson's 'Observations on Southey's Wesley,' p. 149.) At all events they increased rapidly, and by the end of the century had become common. See Nichols's 'Lit. Anec.,' vol. v, pp. 678, 679; Nichols's 'Illustrations,' vol. i, p. 460; 'Life of Wilberforce,' vol. i, p. 180; vol. ii, p. 296; Wesley's 'Journals,' pp. 806, 897."

CHAPTER VI.

THE REVIVAL CARRIED FORWARD BY SOCIETIES AND THE CHURCHES.

IN the preceding chapter we saw how the great Sunday-school revival of the eighteenth century began, and how it was pressed upon the attention of the world by Mr. Robert Raikes, through his paper at Gloucester. His articles were copied extensively by other papers, and so great became the public enthusiasm in the interest of such schools that in the year 1786 it was estimated that there were two hundred and fifty thousand in the Sunday-schools of Great Britain alone.

These schools were at best, however, but enterprises of semi-religious philanthropy. They were taught by hired teachers, and were only intended for the very ignorant children of the pauper classes. The course of study was restricted to the spelling book and hymn book, with some very simple religious instruction.

It therefore became necessary to raise considerable sums of money with which to pay the salaries of the hired teachers, and to provide books and other requisites. There were many communities that could not raise sufficient funds for these purposes, and yet they were of all parties the communities which most needed the Sunday-school. There were others who were not only very poor, but very vicious, who were, therefore, indifferent to the establishment of Sunday-schools in their midst, and, of course, were neither willing or able to sustain them.

Hence to "carry forward the revival" the organization of societies for the collection of funds became necessary. The first of these was organized in the year 1785. It was the famous "Society for Promoting Sunday-schools in the British Dominions." It was located in London, and was under the leadership of the devoted William Fox. This body did great good, expending during the first sixteen years of its existence £4,000 in paying for the services of hired teachers.

In 1791 the "First-day or Sunday-School Society" was formed in Philadelphia, under the presidency of

the good Bishop White. This society was, like the "Society for Promoting Sunday-schools in the British Dominions," of a general character, being composed of persons of all religious denominations, and even of some who professed no higher grace than a mere philanthropy. More than any other one agency it carried forward the revival in America, establishing Sunday-schools far South as well as in Pennsylvania and the neighboring States. It also gave rise to numerous other societies of a more local character. We shall have occasion to see its work again in a future chapter, and so we dismiss it for the present.

In the year 1797 "The Gratis Sunday-School Society" was established in Scotland, on very much the same plan and for similar purposes as those which we have mentioned as being founded in London and Philadelphia.

These societies so stimulated the enterprise, and private individuals not connected with them so carried forward the work, that Sunday-schools spread with a most wonderful rapidity. The Church of Christ could not ignore them. If they were bad

she must denounce them. If they were good she must use them; and she pronounced them good. There were two difficulties in her way, however, and they must be removed before she could use them to advantage. The first was the difficulty of raising the money to pay the teachers, and the second was the mercenary spirit and conduct of many of those teachers. A Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., removed both obstacles with one stroke. The members of this Church began to be the teachers, and the Sunday-school became as much a part of the weekly Church exercises as the prayer-meeting.

Almost simultaneously with the introduction of the plan of the Pittsburgh Church, Mrs. Isabella Graham and Mrs. Joanna Bethune began, in addition to paying hired teachers, to teach in the Sunday-schools of New York. Their work, however, was not in connection with any Church.

These two instances of voluntary work were of a local character, and are recorded more as forerunners of the great work of the Church in Sunday-schools than as the beginnings of that work.

Fortunately for Sunday-schools, John Wesley, the

great evangelist and unexcelled organizer, lived at this time. He was at the head of a growing religious organization, and early conceived the idea of making the Sunday-schools, as he said, "nurseries of the Church." He encouraged good people wherever he went to work in them as teachers without pecuniary reward. He gave to Methodism an impulse toward Sunday-schools which lasts even until this day, and which has done much to make the Methodists conspicuous for their interest and success in the work.

So, as early as February, 1790, the Methodist Episcopal Church held a Conference at Charleston, S. C., in which they took strong and high ground for Sunday-schools. Bishop Francis Asbury, who, it will be remembered, was as enthusiastic a friend of Sunday-schools as Mr. Wesley, presided over the Conference. The Conference passed a resolution embodying, in the main, a most apostolic plan; but, strange to say, the plan was not at once executed. Religious bodies then, perhaps, as they are now, were addicted to passing and forgetting a great many good resolutions. The action of this Con-

ference was the first general Church action in reference to Sunday-schools, and was as follows:

"Let us labor, as the heart and soul of one man, to establish Sunday-schools in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers, to teach *gratis* all that will attend and have a capacity to learn, from six o'clock in the morning till ten, and from two o'clock in the afternoon till six, where it does not interfere with public worship. The council shall compile a proper school book to teach them learning and piety."

On the other side of the Atlantic the Methodists were equally zealous, but not so prompt in their action. In 1802 the Sunday-school Committee of Wesleyans was organized in London for the purpose of correspondence, and other efforts to promote the organization, and improvement of the Sunday-schools in the Wesleyan Societies of Great Britain.

Subsequently (as early as 1809 in the United States) other denominations pursued similar plans with the Sunday-schools, establishing them in connec-

tion with the Churches under their direction and control. At the time of this writing there is not a denomination of Christians in any Protestant country that has not extensive denominational enterprises for the promotion of Sunday-schools. Nearly all of the Churches have their own denominational Sunday-school editors, publishing houses, and publications. Many of them have Sunday-school evangelists in the field organizing, under the direction of associations, conventions, or unions, schools of their own "faith and order." There is to this assertion, however, one solitary and obscure exception. There are in the States of New York, Georgia, North Carolina, and a few other States, communities of Christians who call themselves Primitive Baptists. They are an antiquated offshoot of the ancient Anabaptists, and are called in the provincial parlance of the ignorant people in whose midst they live "Hard Shells." The term is, perhaps, derived from their extremely severe views of election and foreordination, and these doctrines as held by them explain their bitter opposition to Sunday-schools. They say that if their children are of the elect they will be saved without

instruction or other means of grace. In keeping with the same idea it is their habit never in preaching to appeal to unconverted persons. This curious sect is rapidly fading away before the intelligence of the times. They are making few converts outside of their own families, and not always there, and have few or no sympathizers, except in the case of a few eccentric men who plead their "hard shellism" in reply to the appeals of conscience and of friends on the question of religious duty.

The work of the general societies mentioned in the first part of this chapter, and the efforts of the Churches in behalf of Sunday-schools, gave rise to many useful institutions, known as "Sunday-School Unions." To these we next turn our attention.

CHAPTER VII.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNIONS.

AS we saw in the last chapter, before the Churches assumed direction of the Sunday-schools, when the teaching was by hired instructors, it became necessary to organize Societies or Unions for carrying forward the work. When the Churches introduced voluntary and unpaid teachers, and extended the work of the schools not only to poor children, but to all children, these Unions were found to be of great assistance in the publication of suitable books for the schools already in existence, and in sending forth missionaries for the establishment of new ones. There was an additional advantage derived from them in another direction, namely, while the Churches looked closely after supplying the wants of denominational schools, there were many places (as there are now) where there were not enough persons of any one denomination to make a successful Sunday-school. Persons from

several denominations could be found, however, who, coming together, could easily carry on a very useful union school, at such a place. In such cases the Sunday-School Unions, composed of Christians of all denominations, were indispensable in furnishing books, charts, and papers about which there could be no debate.

The first Sunday-School Union organized was the "London Sunday-School Union," established in the year 1803. Next followed the "Hibernian," organized in 1809. The "New York Sunday-School Union" was organized in 1816, while around Philadelphia there sprang up several local Unions, which were merged into the "American Sunday-School Union" in 1824. All these, and others established at a later day, did an enormous and invaluable work in the spread of Sunday-schools. If the newspapers of Raikes and his contemporaries scattered the Sunday-school *idea*, these Unions spread the *institution* every-where in Great Britain and the United States.

The Churches were not slow to see the great power of such grand propagandists, and so there

were Sunday-School Unions established by nearly all of the leading denominations of the United States. Most of these are flourishing to this day, though several of them have been discontinued. It is a notable fact that the Sunday-school has prospered most in those Churches and countries in which Sunday-School Unions have been established and continued. Perhaps the secret of the fact is contained in the following sensible paragraph from the Annual Report of the "American Sunday-School Union:"

"Previous to the establishment of these unions, Sunday-school teachers resembled scattered warriors in an enemy's country. Individually they had been valiant and victorious in their separate stations, but a combination of talents, of energy, and of means, was much needed." In this case, at least, the "children of this world" cannot claim superiority over the "children of light." The disciples of Christ of this time caught the spirit of the Master's policy, in sending forth the seventy, "two by two."

Of late years, through the influence of the work

of the "Foreign Sunday-School Association,"* there have been Sunday-School Unions established on the continent of Europe, and already the Sunday-school has begun to revive there. This new organization has grasped the union idea at once. It was natural that it should do so. Its founder and president has long been actively connected with the "American Sunday-School Union," and has had ample opportunity to test the wisdom of such a policy.

It will serve to show the methods of all the Sunday-School Unions of this country to give a sketch of the operations of the most prominent of them all—"The American Sunday-School Union." To most persons the reasons for giving such prominence to this organization will be obvious; but, lest some one should fail to appreciate the motives that impel us to do so, we will say:

1. Sketches of the origin and progress of all the

* It is but just to say that the "London Sunday-School Union" and the "Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church" of America had accomplished much good on the continent in this matter before this "Association" was organized.

Sunday-School Unions that have been established are impracticable. They would swell this volume to too great a size, and would not compensate the author or the reader for the labor devoted to them.

2. The history of one Sunday-School Union is very much the history of all. A stereotyped chapter, with blanks for the names and figures, would suit almost all of them.

3. The American Sunday-School Union, of all others, has affected most extensively and usefully the Sunday-school work of the world, and deserves to be recognized as chief of all.

For these and other reasons we devote the next chapter to the "American Sunday-School Union."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.

WE have had occasion to recur before, in the progress of this narrative, to the fact that great results are not ordinarily the consequences of a moment. We again remind our readers of it, and call attention to its repeated illustration. Genius is a rare quality, and the occasions which demand it are equally unusual. Consecrated common sense to know what to do, and sanctified industry to obey the dictates of such mind, are, and ever have been, the main factors of human success.

The American Sunday-School Union is an admirable example of the truth of these reflections. Several societies that had preceded it prepared the soil for its growth, and the death of some others, while seeming to be misfortunes, were blessings in disguise. Their lives were good, and even their disintegration fertilized the soil for this great plant. From the small beginnings of the society organ-

ized on the 11th of January, 1791, under the presidency of Bishop White, the work went forward, meeting old wants and creating new ones, until nothing less than a great national society, erected upon the broad foundation of Christian fellowship, and held together by the cohesive force of common motives and a common cause, could satisfy the public demand.

Among the voices that cried in the wilderness, preparing the way for this grand institution, may be mentioned the following societies and unions: "The First-day, or Sunday-School Society of Philadelphia;" "The Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union;" "The Male Adult School Society of Philadelphia," afterward "The Auxiliary Evangelical Society of Philadelphia;" and "The Sunday and Adult School Association of Philadelphia." All these served their day and generation well, and made possible the organization of the "American Sunday-School Union," by accomplishing results, the influence of which lives until this day.

The individual to whom we seem to be indebted for the conception of a general Sunday-School

Union was Mr. Eleazer Lord. Spending most of the year 1815 in Philadelphia, which was at that time the radiating center of the Sunday-school operations of this country, he studied closely all the plans and methods there in use. Returning to New York, in the latter part of the summer of the same year, he devoted the autumn and winter to the projection of the "New York Sunday-School Union."

It was in the annual report of this union, published May, 1820, that the idea of a national Sunday-School Union first saw the light, and it was probably suggested by Mr. Lord.

"Four years later," it is said, "after correspondence on the subject, a printed plan had been distributed for consideration, and the attendance of delegates from various and distant societies had been solicited. A meeting was held on the 11th of December, 1823, in the city of Philadelphia, when the expediency of forming a national society was determined on, and the whole subject was referred to the ensuing annual meeting of the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union.

"The basis of the proposed union was no sacrifice of principle, no compromise of duty, no interference with the internal management of smaller associations . . . all discordant elements must be banished, and union with Christ, and union with each other, form the basis of the American Sunday-School Union."

The mouths of the friends of the project were full of arguments in its favor. With a prophetic accuracy which later years have vindicated they declared that "through the various publications which a national union will circulate information will be extended, useful plans and pleasing facts reported, the general experience rendered available to individuals, mutual encouragements will excite each other to zeal, mutual prayers ascending to the throne of grace will bring down blessings from the God of love."

The necessity and expediency of forming a general union being determined, the location of the union was discussed, and Philadelphia was selected because "of the central situation of Pennsylvania in the Union, its close connection with the western

States, and from the fact that the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union was the largest institution of the kind in our country."

In pursuance of these proceedings, on the evening of the 25th of May, 1824, at the seventh annual meeting of the Sunday and Adult School Union, the following resolutions were offered by Thomas Bradford, Esq., of Philadelphia, and seconded by Rev. Gardiner Spring, D.D., of New York:

"*Whereas*, The great and progressing increase of Sabbath-schools throughout our country, exerting a powerful and most beneficial influence over all classes of society, calls loudly for union and *organized action;* and the prosperity of this society shows clearly the efficiency of such union; and *whereas*, the Constitution of the American Sunday-School Union has been approved by the Sunday and Adult School Union of Philadelphia, and other Unions; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the Constitution of the American Sunday-School Union be adopted."

The following were the first officers elected:

PRESIDENT.

ALEXANDER HENRY.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

THOMAS LATIMER,	Phila.	CHARLES F. MERCER,	Virginia.
JOSEPH L. INGLIS,	"	JAMES BROWNLEE,	S. Carol'a,
PETER HUMES,	N. Y. City.	DAVID L. MORRILL,	N. H.
TIM. D. WILLIAMS,	Conn.		

MANAGERS.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER,	Phila.	JOHN FARR,	Phila.
JOHN ANDREWS,	"	ISRAEL KINSMAN,	"
WILLIAM A. RUDEL,	"	JAMES B. LONGACRE,	"
JOHN D. GEORGE,	"	JOSEPH NAGLEE,	"
JOHN S. HENRY,	"	JOHN OWEN,	"
E. W. SEELY,	"	JOHN C. PECHIN,	"
ABEL VINTON,	"	ANDREW ADGATE,	Maryland.
AMBROSE WHITE,	"	SAMUEL BAYARD,	New Jersey.
GEORGE B. CLAXTON,	"	GEORGE W. COE,	Georgia.
JOSEPH H. DULLES,	"	FRANCIS S. KEY,	Dist. of Col.
FREDERICK ERRINGER,	"	SAMUEL HUBBARD,	Mass.
AARON KILLE,	"	JAMES HARPER,	Kentucky.
JOHN M'MULLIN,	"	SAMUEL THOMPSON,	Penn.
JOHN W. PETERS,	"	JOSIAH VINTON, JUN.,	Mass.
SAMUEL J. ROBBINS,	"	T. S. GOODMAN,	Ohio.
WILLIAM H. RICHARDS,	"	GEORGE HUNTINGTON,	N. Y.
JOHN M. ATWOOD,	"	JAMES H. PECK,	Missouri.
SOLOMON ALLEN,	"	THOMAS STOKES,	New York.

FREDERICK W. PORTER, *Corresponding Secretary.*

ABRAHAM MARTIN, *Recording Secretary.*

HUGH DE HAVEN, JR., *Treasurer.*

The preamble to the Constitution, as adopted, declared the object of the Union to be: "To concentrate the efforts of the Sabbath-school societies in different portions of our country, to strengthen the hands of the friends of pious instruction on the Lord's day, to disseminate useful information, circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land, and to endeavor to plant a Sunday-school wherever there is a population." The breadth of its mission was conceived to comprehend "the best interests, not of one, but of every rank and class—men, women, and children—within our gates, within a field of labor extending from Florida to Michigan, and from ocean to ocean."

How well this grand mission has been fulfilled may be to some extent inferred from the following figures. There is, however, "an eternal weight of glory" due the Union which no computation can express. The figures are as follows: Number of Sunday-schools organized from 1824 to 1879, 67,154; containing teachers, 435,456; containing scholars, 2,869,872.

For the first fifty years of its existence the

American Sunday-School Union expended in missionary work $2,133,264 13, of which amount $517,000 were expended for books, papers, etc., furnished to needy Sunday-schools. The value of books, papers, etc., circulated through sale and donation during that period was about $6,000,000.

The American Sunday-School Union, by its publications, especially by its series of "Union Question Books" and "Selected Lessons," contributed no little to the preparation of the public mind in America for the reception of the great uniform system of lessons now in use. It did much also toward the inauguration of the system of conventions and institutes now so generally employed by the Sunday-school workers of the United States and Canada. Indeed, in the part of the preamble and constitution quoted on the foregoing page there are found dim hints looking toward this wide-spread movement.

The work of the "American Sunday-School Union" was never more vigorously or successfully carried on than now. Its missionaries are penetrating the darkest and most remote nooks and

corners of the country. It is publishing annually large quantities of the most interesting books for the use of Sunday-schools, and, in addition to these publications, is issuing beautiful and excellent Sunday-school papers, quarterlies, and lesson leaves.

Its most interesting result is its offshoot and auxiliary, the "Foreign Sunday-School Association." To this unique institution we devote a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FOREIGN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

THIS association is one of the most notable and unique movements in the history of Sunday-schools. The New World is through it establishing Sunday-schools in the Old, and Europe is receiving back from America the heaven-born institution which she gave a century ago.

This movement will mark an epoch in the Sunday-school history of the world, and so, allotting to it large space, we permit its own officers to tell the story of its origin and progress. We extract the account from the Annual Report of 1879:

"In bringing a report of our work during the past year to the attention of our friends, it has been deemed not inappropriate, since the document may fall perhaps into the hands of many who are unacquainted with our organization, to give an account, brief as may be consistent with clearness and accuracy, of the origin, history, occasion, and

methods of our Association. One of our members took occasion, during a visit to Europe some seventeen years ago, to endeavor to induce the Christians of Europe to engage in Sunday-school work.

"The state of things existing in the religious world of Europe seemed to call for some such activity. The rising generation was growing up between a lifeless formalism on the one hand and rationalism on the other. Religion was in the hands of the government. The clergy were as truly a part of its organization as its police. The ordinances of the Church were the law of the nation, and the Church member felt no more call or responsibility for the spread of the Gospel than he did for the collection of the custom-house dues. Men were all Christians — of course they were. Had they not been baptized in infancy and confirmed by proper officials at the legal age?

"In this state of things there had grown up a number, considerable if not large, of those who were believers indeed, whose faith, formed beneath the pressure of external adverse circumstances, seemed to excel the faith of other nations as the

diamond surpasses charcoal. These were living in daily intimate communion with God. They grieved over the state of things which they saw around them, as Lot in Sodom; but like him they did not appear to conceive that there was any thing which they could do to improve it.

"To any one who is acquainted with the working of the Sunday-school in this country, in its double work of quickening the graces of those who teach, and blessing the souls of those who learn, it must be evident that it is an institution, by its very nature, admirably adapted to meet just the state of things above described. It is, in the first place, capable of utilizing any number of Christians, however few, in any place. It is not necessary to wait till the nucleus shall become large enough to call for and support a minister. A half dozen Christians may associate themselves for work after its methods. . . .

"Here is the problem and its answer. Given an immense work to be done, a vast field waiting to be cultivated, not preachers enough to send nor means enough forthcoming to support them, how

shall these nations be reached and evangelized? Just at hand is the answer. Here is a small company of Christian believers, already excellent, but who would be better for the exercise of teaching others. Adapted to the work, acquainted with the language, capable of avoiding national prejudices, already personally interested in their scholars by ties of blood and neighborhood, willing to work without pay; only waiting because they never have been told that there is any thing for them to do, or what to do, or how to do it.

"Here is the Sunday-school, an institution which takes these men and women and sets them at work teaching to all around the truths of the Gospel as contained in the word of God. Why can they not be induced to take it up? The experiment was tried, and succeeded beyond all expectations. A brother in Naples received the institution as an answer to his prayers for something to give his people to do. Germany hailed the institution as a means of rekindling the affection of the people in the Church. Holland took up the institution and gave it a warm and cordial reception.

"Returning to this country, it seemed possible to carry on from a distance, by letter-writing, (itself a disused institution of New Testament origin and sanction,) the work which had been begun by personal visit and individual appeal. A company of ladies associated themselves as a corresponding committee. They found, from those already at work, the names of others who were not, but who needed only encouragement, instruction, and a little assistance, to begin. They had translated and printed in different languages directions for the organization and conduct of Sunday-schools which had approved themselves to the experience of this country. They sent these to the address of any one whose name they could gather from travelers, colporteurs, missionaries' reports, or any other source. They told them of the blessings the Church had received and individuals had derived from the Sunday-schools in this land, and asked them to try them among them and receive similar benefits. They inquired as to the circumstances by which they were surrounded. They asked about difficulties, and suggested means for their removal,

prompted by experience. They gave assurance of sympathy, and promised such pecuniary assistance toward the purchase of strictly Sunday-school material — maps, papers, library books, etc. — as the limited means at their command permitted.

"Such was the origin and the occasion which called forth the Foreign Sunday-School Association. Such are its methods of work — simple, scriptural, and of proved efficiency.

"But this is by no means all they have done, and are doing. The beginning of the work brought to light needs. In some languages there was no literature of a religious character adapted for children. Library books, and children's papers, and teachers' helps were unknown, or but in a very embryonic condition, and the association set themselves to supply, so far as in them lay, the deficiency. In this department they have begun, or co-operated with others in the beginning and support of journals published in weekly numbers, similar to our child's paper, in Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, German, Italian, and French."

The Association has grown to considerable pro-

portions, and in the year 1878 was incorporated according to the laws of the State of New York.

It is entirely undenominational. Its correspondence, and, indeed, all its operations, are conducted by unsalaried officers. It incurs no expenses for office-rent, fuel, lights, etc., holding its sessions at the residence of the founder and president, A. Woodruff, Esq., 130 State-street, Brooklyn, and its other business being transacted from the homes of the several officers. Most, if not all, of its secretaries are Christian women.

The work already accomplished may be inferred from the subjoined table. Most of the work expressed in these figures has been done through the agents and coadjutors of the Foreign Sunday-School Association :*

	Schools.	Teachers.	Scholars.
Italy	160		65,000
Spain	100		3,500
France	1,082	2,000	50,000
Syria	24		
Japan	40		
Portugal	30		
German Switzerland	405		
Germany	1,977	8,325	162,251

* See note on page 61.

This Association is destined to work a revolution of no small magnitude. German rationalism cannot cope with the word of God in power, and less can Romish tradition and superstition. Once let that Word be taught to the children, as it has begun to be taught in the lands blighted by these godless systems, and the next generation will attend their funerals, if, indeed, they should receive such respect at their decease.

The continental Sabbath will now begin to wane, and America will do well to take care that as its sun declines in Europe its parching beams do not fall upon her.

CHAPTER X.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

THERE are certain concomitants, or rather instruments, of the Sunday-school which have a history of their own which we have not found convenient to embody in the foregoing pages. Hence, at this point we introduce three parenthetical chapters upon "Sunday-school Libraries," "Sunday-school Music," and "Sunday-school Rooms and Furniture."

The Sunday-schools of the primitive Church, as one would suppose, had no libraries; nor did the Sunday-schools of the Culdees nor of the Waldenses; nor, indeed, did any of the Sunday-schools of the "Middle Ages" have libraries. It is quite possible and probable that the books of Oberlin were used by the pupils of his Sunday-schools, and so, perhaps, were the books of Alleine; but they cannot be regarded as Sunday-school libraries.

The Sunday-schools of the time of Raikes and

Wesley were, as we have seen, intended, for the most part, for the children of the pauper classes. These children were exceedingly ignorant, and libraries would hardly have been of use to them. The schools were very similar to many of the common schools of America, except that they were taught only on one day of the week. And as libraries are rarely, if ever, thought of in connection with these common schools, so in this case they were not deemed necessary.

The Sunday-school came to a different class of pupils in America, and the American mind was not slow to see the utility of circulating libraries in connection with the institution. The Sunday-school Unions first introduced them, and they soon came into very general use on both sides of the Atlantic, being found especially useful as the Sunday-school came to contain not the ignorant and poor alone, but the children of all ranks and conditions. The first books in these libraries were small tracts and story-books in paper covers, of a very poor quality, such only being then attainable.

About the year 1810 the Religious Tract Society

of London began issuing children's books of an improved style, as to paper, cuts, and contents, with a special view to Sunday-school demands. Their production begat an additional demand, and to this day the Society is going on daily enlarging the list and improving the quality of its publications for the young. It publishes, also, many books for teachers and adults engaged in Sunday-school work. To Great Britain this Society has thus been of more value than her conquests and of more power than her conquerors.

In America Sunday-school books have been published of great beauty and at marvelously low prices. The various Sunday-school Unions, especially the American Sunday-School Union, and many private publishers, have made such books a specialty. In this matter the American Tract Society deserves special mention. It has been to the United States very much what the Religious Tract Society of London has been to Great Britain.

No other libraries are so widely diffused as the Sunday-school libraries. In cities, where great libraries commonly exist, they have not been intimi-

dated or eclipsed by their powerful competitors. In the country and remote districts they have not been discouraged by the difficulties of place or surroundings. They have become so numerous and important in the United States as to demand and receive enumeration in the national census. In the census of 1870 every one must admit that their magnitude justifies their presence. The figures are: Sunday-school libraries, 33,580; volumes, 8,346,153. This amazing aggregate, be it said, does not include the State of Connecticut, and is doubtless much greater at this time in those states which it does include.

In the main these libraries have furnished wholesome and useful reading matter. Yet, it must be frankly admitted, that there have been found in them a considerable percentage of worthless, not to say pernicious, books. Perhaps a sensible criticism by Margaret Fuller would most fitly describe the books in question, and it may also serve, if attentively read, to purge some of our libraries of them. She says: "There is too much among us of the French way of palming off false accounts of things

on children to 'do them good,' and showing nature to them in a magic lantern, 'purified for the use of childhood,' and telling stories of sweet little girls and brave little boys—O, all so good, so bad! and, above all, so *little*, and every thing about them so little. Children accustomed to move in full-sized apartments, and to converse with full-grown men and women, do not need this baby-house style of literature. They like, or they would like, better things, much more." This literature has run its course, and is being supplanted by a most excellent kind of lively biographies and small histories and travels, as well as a certain better class of sacred fiction. It has left behind it, however, one great difficulty; while it lived it daily defeated the purpose of a library by creating a disgust for them in the minds of the pupils. Now that a better class of books has begun to circulate, they suffer the unmerited neglect which the others so richly deserved.

It is also true that the attractive periodical literature of the Sunday-schools of the present time has tended somewhat to subtract from the interest in

the library. This effect it is to be hoped will not continue, for there is a mission for good books, especially to the children of the poorer classes, which no periodical literature, however attractive and excellent, can supply.

The evidence on every hand that the Sunday-school world appreciates this truth gives good prospect of the early gratification of the hope expressed. A reaction has already begun, the progress of which the cravings of the children, the wisdom of the Church, and the sagacity of publishers will conspire to render very rapid. All pious and thoughtful people will give a hearty welcome to the Sunday-school library "of the future." It will not drive out the periodicals, but will render them more useful and appreciable to the minds of the young.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL MUSIC.

AS an auxiliary of other more didactic methods of instruction music has no superior. Warming the sensibilities, it facilitates thereby the passage of truth to the intellectual faculties, and makes the impression more vivid and moving. At that supreme moment, the night before the crucifixion, when the Saviour founded the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that moment when the fearful disciples needed so sadly comfort and instruction, it is said, "When they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." Perhaps their song was some one of the Messianic psalms, that spoke beforehand of his death and his glory. Be that as it may, it is certain that by the act the Master testified his appreciation of sacred song as a means of grace, and the record shows how deep was the impression upon the minds of the disciples.

It is not strange, therefore, that from the first the

practice has existed of devoting to music a part of the time alloted to Sunday-school instruction, and that the custom still continues. We have no authoritative statement to the effect that singing was a part of the exercises of the catechumenical schools, or of the Sunday-schools of the Culdees, or of the Waldensian Sunday-schools, though we can but believe it was. It is well known that when Luther revived the Sunday-school in Germany, modeling it, as we know, in all other respects after the catechumena of the primitive Church, he introduced sacred music.

In Mr. Wesley's Journal we find the following entry upon the subject as it was in his time: "We went on to Bolton, where I preached in the evening in one of the most elegant houses in the kingdom, and to me one of the liveliest congregations. And this I must avow, there is not such a set of singers in any one of the Methodist congregations in the three kingdoms. There cannot be, for we have near a hundred such trebles, boys and girls selected out of our Sunday-schools, and accurately taught, as are not found together in any chapel,

cathedral, or music room within the four seas. Besides the spirit with which they sing the beauty of many of them so suits the melody that I defy any to exceed it, except the singing of the angels in our Father's house. On Sunday at eight and at one the house was thoroughly filled. About three I met between nine hundred and a thousand of the children belonging to our Sunday-schools. I never saw such a sight before. They were all exactly clean as well as plain in their apparel. All were serious and well behaved. Many, both boys and girls, had as beautiful faces as I believe England or Europe can afford. When they all sung together, and none of them out of tune, the melody was beyond that of any theater; and, what is best of all, many of them truly fear God, and some rejoice in his salvation." My apology for quoting so long a paragraph is that it perfectly narrates the effect of the Sunday-school music in every age of the institution. The names and dates of the passage might be changed, and it would as fitly describe the singing in the schools of the reformer Luther, or that of the schools of the Catholic Borromeo.

The first effect of the Sunday-school music has always been to render the schools attractive to the children. "Between nine hundred and a thousand children" could not be gathered together without some such instrumentality. But this has not been the only or the best result. It has served to impress the children with religious truth until "many of them truly fear God and some rejoice in his salvation." Perhaps the most natural and perceptible effect is one noted by Mr. Wesley as to the improvement of the congregational singing at the more formal services of the sanctuary. This was invariably true until the period when there began to be introduced in the Sunday-schools certain sprightly, but not always useful, ballads in the place of the grand old songs of Zion. If we have noted the evil of trifling books in the libraries there is greater need of observing the presence of frivolous songs in the Sunday-school music. This pernicious habit has grown more and more damaging every year, and in connection with the still worse habit of sending the children to Sunday-school and keeping them from the church services, which has

prevailed in many cases, it has filled the minds of the young with thousands of silly ditties, more or less religious, to the exclusion of the standard and useful hymns of the Churches.

Since the introduction of what is known as the "International System of Lessons," there has been an attempt to increase this evil by machine poets and musicians seeking to make a batch of songs suitable to each lesson of the year. Fortunately there has no considerable success attended these efforts.

The music of both the Churches and the Sunday-schools of any period is measured largely by the evangelism of the period. Hence the wonderful labors of Moody and Sankey in Great Britain and America, and the work of others of like mind, has very much improved the Sunday-school music of the present time. For the good results in this direction perhaps to no one man is there due more than to the lamented P. P. Bliss.

These men, while using many new hymns, have not neglected many of the best of the old ones, so that these, together with other influences, have set

in motion a current toward a better type of Sunday-school music. If we can continue it until it has accomplished its purpose we shall again hear children sing almost as divinely as do "the angels in our Father's house." We need but to perfect with a little sensible training the praise which issues from the "mouths of babes and sucklings" to make the air again tremulous with this rapturous melody. God speed the day when such shall be the case!

CHAPTER XII.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL ROOMS AND FURNITURE.

A GREAT idea, though an invisible force, is the strongest of all powers, and, sooner or later, makes its presence seen and felt in a thousand outward forms. It voices itself in poetry, oratory, and music. It modifies social and political institutions, and demands a niche in history by converting them to monuments of its potency. It traces itself in the architectural lines of the homes and temples of the people who furnish it with shelter and protection.

These reflections find conspicuous illustration in the history of "Sunday-school Rooms and Furniture." They have so possessed the Churches that they have modified the buildings, externally and internally. When the children came into the house it had to be enlarged and rearranged with reference to them. For the purposes of the catechumenical schools of the primitive Church there were buildings erected and set apart in the neighborhood of

the churches. The early Christians knew nothing of the modern cruelty of economy, which we often see manifest in crowding children into damp *cellars*, *alias basements*, and they knew less of that inconvenient and unseemly habit of using the main auditorium of their church buildings for the purposes of a Sunday-school.

The Culdees copied precisely in this respect the practice of the early Church, and it may be pertinent to remark, at this point, that their practice in all things is so nearly uniform with that of apostolic times as to suggest an apostle as the founder of their Church, or, at least, that they derived their origin in no remote manner from an apostolic source.

The practice of the Waldenses was various as to the character and position of their Sunday-school rooms. Their poverty and the exigencies of their times made any special preparation of such structures impossible.

The Sunday-schools of Luther and his coadjutors were, in many cases, provided with rooms, such as were used by the primitive Church.

Oberlin, Alleine, Raikes, and others of later times, used any rooms which could be obtained. The instruction in all these schools was of a very decidedly secular complexion; and the thought of imparting it in the Churches, or even in connection with the Churches, seems never to have occurred to any of them. Rooms were rented and the teachers were paid wages, just as in any other schools for secular instruction. With the introduction of more strictly religious instruction by the voluntary efforts of Christian teachers the Sunday-school was brought into the Churches. This movement began in the United States, having been first inaugurated, as we have seen, in a church at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Rapidly it spread over the Sunday-school world.

It soon became apparent to many Churches that the preaching-room was not suited to Sunday-school purposes, the maps, mottoes, pictures, etc., not being appropriate to be hung upon the walls of such a room, and the arrangement of pews being inconvenient for the purposes of the Sunday-school. To meet this case many Churches were not and have

not yet been able to make any provision—most of the Churches in rural districts being compelled to use their preaching-room for Sunday-school purposes as well as other services. In cities and towns the relief for the case more generally adopted has been what are called basements, being under-ground rooms, more or less well lighted and ventilated, and sometimes tolerably dry.

Of late years many Churches have gone back to the apostolic plan of having a room adjoining the church, and on a level with it, above ground, in which their Sunday-schools are held. Others have preferred to make the grown people climb stairs than to compel the children to breathe the damp air of a cellar, and so have their Sunday-school room on the first floor and their preaching-room above. This practice will, probably, be more popular than any others in cities where ground is costly, even to an inch of space. To have either a room adjoining the church, or to adopt the plan last mentioned, modifies the external appearance of church edifices, and so the skill of the architect is called upon to preserve the gracefulness and

beauty of the churches externally. Already this need has brought forth many new and beautiful designs, and it is destined to affect church architecture yet more and more.

But if the Sunday-school has changed the external appearances of the churches the internal arrangements are no less affected. Entering one of our improved modern Sunday-school rooms, you will find the infant class cut off from the main body of the school by convenient sections and partitions. So also certain more advanced classes are separated from the others. This contributes much to the ease with which such classes are taught, by withdrawing them from the noise and distraction which are the inevitable results of many classes being taught together. Indeed, it is hard to see how an infant class could be successfully carried on at all without such an arrangement.

Every species of helps and conveniences that ingenuity can devise or money provide are being brought to this work; and imagination can hardly forecast what other additions or modifications will be made in Sunday-school rooms in the near future.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL CONVENTIONS, INSTITUTES, AND ASSEMBLIES.

RETURNING from our parenthesis, we take up the thread of the narrative, and proceed to unfold our tale.

One of the incidental but prominent results of the Sunday-school movement of our times, has been the development of unity of heart and of action among Christians of different denominations. More than all other agencies it has brought into active play the principle of associated effort. In the year 1785 we have seen how it brought forth a crystallization of this principle in the form of "The Society for Promoting Sunday-schools in the British Dominions." We saw, also, how similar societies rapidly succeeded it. These union organizations were not only the exponents of the great principle of Christian co-operation, but they became the preachers and propagators of the doctrine. So, while serv-

ing their own specified purposes, they tended to open the way for the introduction of a more popular, because a more portable, institution, namely, "The Sunday-School Convention."

The first of such assemblies of which we know any thing was held by the venerable Stephen Paxson, a missionary in the employ of the American Sunday-School Union. We do well to call him "Father Paxson," for in this case, as in many other instances, he has been the father of much good to American Sunday-schools.

The idea was so full of common-sense, and it came to light in a quarter so favorable to publication, that the plan rapidly became general; so rapidly, in fact, that we have not been able to trace it from county to county, or even from State to State.

The first National Convention of Sunday-school workers was called by a conference of superintendents and teachers from thirteen States and two Territories, on the recommendation of the American Sunday-School Union. It assembled in Chatham-street Chapel, New York, at 10 A.M. of Wednesday, October 3, 1832. Honorable Theodore Frelinghuy-

sen, of New Jersey, was elected President. The following is a list of the National Conventions that followed:

2. Philadelphia, May 22, 1853. Hon. WILLARD HALL, of Delaware, president.

3. Philadelphia, February 22, 1859. Ex-Governor JAMES POLLOCK, of Pennsylvania, president.

4. Newark, N. J., April 28, 1869. Hon. GEORGE H. STUART, of Pennsylvania, president.

5. Indianapolis, April 16, 1872. PHILIP G. GILLETT, LL.D., of Illinois, president.

At the session of 1872 the National Convention was made international by the adoption of the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That the Sabbath-School Associations of the British Provinces be invited to send delegates to the next National Convention of the United States, and that such Convention be hereafter designated and known as 'The International Convention of the United States and British America.'"

The "International Sunday-School Convention" held its first session at Baltimore, Md., in 1875, representing a Sunday-school membership of 6,850,599.

The president of this session was the well-known Baptist minister and distinguished Sunday-school worker, Rev. George A. Peltz, of New Jersey. The second session of the Convention was held in Atlanta, Ga., and represented a Sunday-school membership of 7,738,790. It was presided over by His Excellency A. H. Colquitt, the present Governor of Georgia.

There is soon to be held in London a kind of world's Sunday-School Convention in the way of the Raikes' Centennial. The occasion bids fair to be one of great interest, and there will, probably, engage in the exercises delegates from every part of the Sunday-school world.

The Sunday-School Institute.—No idea has been more fruitful of good to the Sunday-school cause than the conception that many of the methods employed in fitting teachers of secular schools for their work are useful in preparing Sunday-school teachers for their holy calling. This idea is the formative idea of the "Sunday-School Institute." It was found that while Sunday-school conventions were useful in the discussion and dissemination of

the general principles of Sunday-school work, and that while they were especially useful in arousing and directing the enthusiasm of workers, they nevertheless left an all-important work undone. They were necessarily too brief for any extended work of normal instruction. The Institute only could meet the case.

The first suggestion of such an enterprise is, perhaps, due to Rev. Dr. D. P. Kidder, of Drew Theological Seminary. In the year 1847, while he was Corresponding Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Sunday-School Union, we find him, in his annual report, using the following thoughtful and strong language. After referring to the teachers' institutes for secular instructors, he says: "Such meetings of teachers, if judiciously conducted, can hardly fail to be profitable; and they give occasion to ask why Sunday-school teachers may not have similar means of improvement? Perhaps a basis for them is already established in our district Sunday-school conventions, and in the courses of lectures delivered to Sunday-school teachers.

"Why may not these be rendered more practical,

and, consequently, more interesting? Even if all the teachers of a district could not meet during a sufficient length of time to take a complete series of lessons on the best methods of Sunday-school instruction, those who could, if representatives of the different schools, might return and impart the knowledge they had received to their several associates. In cities, if the spirit of the enterprise sufficiently prevailed, normal classes of Sunday-school teachers might be organized whenever the services of a competent person could be secured to conduct them. Who can tell what an amount of good might be accomplished were some dozens of our most successful and competent laborers in our Sunday-schools to direct a portion of their time annually to training teachers on the plan now suggested? Could they succeed by such means in elevating the general character of Sunday-school instruction; could they give a new impetus to one of the greatest benevolent movements of the age; could they, by moving upon the minds of some hundreds of teachers, influence the hearts and character of thousands of children, would they regret

any sacrifices necessary to accomplish such glorious ends?"

Again he referred to the matter in his report of the following year. He says:—

"The proposal of normal instruction for Sunday-school teachers was suggested in our last report. We confess, however, that we fear the day is distant when the Church will take as high ground on this subject as that assumed by several States of the Union, namely, that in order to promote general education most effectually institutions must be provided for the special instruction of teachers."

While he sowed this germ-thought with this half-despairing earnestness it was sinking down into the soil, and was finally to spring forth into a harvest which he could hardly have imagined when he wrote his report in 1848. It required, it is true, somewhat over ten years to break through the soil, but it also required not less time for J. H. Vincent to grow from meditative boyhood, poring over Church reports, to mature manhood doing the work of the Church.

At the Rock River Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Chicago in October, 1860, the Conference Committee reported as follows:

"The importance of teachers' institutes to the educational interests of the country cannot have escaped your attention. May we not profitably introduce something similar among us? Such an institute, conducted by our ablest Sunday-school educators, could not fail to elevate our standard and improve our system of religious culture." This report was unanimously adopted.

In April, 1861, the Galena District Convention of the same Conference met in Freeport, Illinois. Rev. J. H. Vincent was there and this question was proposed and discussed, "How may we carry out the suggestion of our Conference Sunday-school Committee relative to the Sunday-School Teachers' Institute?" After the discussion had proceeded for a while it was resolved to organize a Sunday-school Institute. On the next day, April 17, the first regularly organized Sunday-school Institute held its session. The district was divided, and sub-insti-

tutes were held at Council Hill, Mount Carroll, Warren, and Freeport, with the most gratifying results.

In June of the same year the Detroit District Convention organized a district institute, at Detroit, Michigan. In November Rev. J. H. Vincent issued a circular "explaining the Institute, its Object and Success, etc.; and giving Full Directions for its Organization and Management." The religious press copied the circular very generally, and in the following year three more districts organized institutes, and they rapidly spread among the Sunday-school workers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These were denominational enterprises, but union Institutes were soon to follow.

In November, 1864, Rev. J. H. Vincent read a carefully prepared essay before the Cook County (Illinois) Sunday-School Teachers' Convention, in Chicago, urging the establishment of "a permanent Sunday-School Teachers' Institute for the Northwest." In that essay he gives us the following interesting bit of history:

"The plan proposed is not new. Our English

brethren illustrate the scheme in the London Sunday-School Union. In the Memorial Building — erected, I think, in 1856, at No. 56 Old Bailey — you may see the plan in successful operation. In connection with ample publishing and sales rooms, they have a large and elegantly furnished committee room, an extensive Teachers' Library, two or three Bible class rooms, and a hall with gallery large enough to accommodate five hundred persons. Here Sunday-school teachers of every denomination meet for consultation, for reading, for study, and worship.

"A regular Sunday-School Union and Normal College is organized; and as the first important step toward its full establishment a training class meets in the Lecture Hall, No. 56 Old Bailey, on every Wednesday evening, commencing at half-past seven o'clock precisely, and closing at nine o'clock."

In furtherance of the suggestions made by the earnest essayist, the North-western Sunday-School Teachers' Institute was established.

While Vincent was working in the North-west,

Wells and Pardee were working in the East. "History repeats itself;" so Katy Ferguson worked in New York without knowledge of the work going on at Gloucester. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent, and moves hearts far removed from each other to sympathetic action.

On December 6, 1864, independently of any previous movements, Ralph Wells and R. G. Pardee, of New York City, held the "Steuben County Sabbath-School Teachers' Institute" in the Methodist Episcopal Church at Corning. These were the first union "Institutes" of which we have any knowledge. Thenceforward they became prevalent in almost every part of the country. The normal idea contained in them has been carried even into some of the colleges of the land, and in those schools students are prepared to become Sunday-school teachers.

The Sunday-School Assembly.—The necessity and method of normal teaching in Sunday-schools now rapidly possessed the public mind, spreading in both denominational and union directions. In the progress of these conventions and institutes about this

time there was frequent talk of the endowment of a "National Sunday-School University." The notion was crude, but it grew and has worked out its results. It directed the minds of thoughtful people in the right direction. It brought forth the Sunday-School Assembly. The first of these was the now famous "Chautauqua Assembly." The idea came to birth in the form of a hint from the mind of Lewis Miller, Esq., of Akron, Ohio. It has been faithfully nursed and brought to a vigorous maturity by Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent. Simeon Gilbert says of it, "It was not an institute or convention or assembly or picnic or camp-meeting merely, but all these in one, and something more—making it in the highest sense of the term, a real school." A scheme of normal study has been devised with extreme care, and the institution is annually ably manned by a strong force of "distinguished ministers, scholars, and thinkers." It grows in completeness of arrangement with every year's session.

Many similar enterprises have been projected in various sections of the country.

We may well pause at this point and inquire what

next in the way of Sunday-school improvement shall we have? We know not. Of one thing we may be certain, and for that thing we may be grateful, our Sunday-schools will never again be what they once were. It is also true that they will not long remain what they are. Both thoughts are full of encouragement.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE UNIFORM LESSON SYSTEM.

THERE is no part of Sunday-school history in which the public mind feels more interest than "The Uniform Lesson System." It marks an epoch in the history of Sunday-schools, and in it future generations will feel concern. Fortunately its history has been well preserved, and is undisputed, "for this thing was not done in a corner."

From the first the Sunday-school has shown itself to be a thing of *life*, and not a dead mechanism. It has had a steady *growth* of improvement. In America it has distinguished its progress by a constant development of a spirit of Christian unity. Some of the results of this very commendable development we have seen in the foregoing pages. Its greatest result we have now before us for consideration.

"The Uniform Lesson System" was made possible by a long series of institutions and enterprises

that preceded it. The primary principle of its development was the spirit of Christian fellowship and union which we have just intimated prevailed in American Sunday-schools from their first establishment. The first result of this spirit was its manifestation in the organization of Sunday-school Unions. These in turn resulted in widening and deepening the influence that gave them birth and brought about the convention and its train of successors.

Into these "Unions" have gone only those possessed of the warmest zeal for the Sunday-school, and over them have presided men so familiar with the necessities of every stage of its progress that they have been quick to provide the best means of supplying those needs. For convenience, we will say that the Sunday-school work of the last century may be divided into three great periods, namely: 1. The era of the mission Sunday-school, teaching only the children of the poor, and teaching for the most part secular studies. The text-books of this period were the spelling book and the hymn book. 2. The era of the Bible-school for children and

some older people. (This system largely prevails in Wales to-day, and it must be confessed that it does not work badly; for the Welsh may well be accounted the Bereans of our times.) 3. The era of the Church school. This period is distinguished by the mania which at its beginning had become every-where prevalent for the almost limitless memorizing of Bible verses. This practice worked a reaction which resulted in its own destruction. The first to see the wisdom and the necessities of this reaction were the Sunday-School Union people, and the "Limited Lesson Scheme" of 1825 was brought forth. It consisted of select Scripture lessons, printed upon cards. They soon obtained a somewhat extensive circulation, and in 1826 were warmly approved by the Committee of the New York Sunday-School Union in their Annual Report, and were recommended for general adoption.

It was in the latter part of this year that Rev. Albert Judson engaged to prepare a monthly series of questions on these lessons for the use of teachers. In the following year he published a question book, stating that it was designed as "a first an-

nual course of instruction." The American Sunday-School Union heartily indorsed the plan, and in 1829 it was declared that "the Selected Lessons are now almost universally introduced."

This system contemplated a five years' course of study, each yearly course to consist of forty lessons, and the whole "to include the principal facts and truths of the Bible." The advantage claimed for this scheme is suggestive and significant. It was claimed that "it required every class to receive instruction on the same lesson at the same time." The following vigorous passage upon the subject is taken from the "American Sunday-School Magazine:"

"The introduction of that system of Sabbath-school instruction which has obtained the appellation of the 'Selected Lessons,' formed a new era in their history. It has been found so superior in every respect to the old plan of allowing and encouraging every child to commit as many chapters or verses for a lesson as he could, and each scholar a different lesson, that the latter is now exploded from every well-conducted Sunday-school, and all

now have the same, and that a limited portion of Scripture to study, to understand, and to commit to memory."

This system did a great deal to prepare the Sunday-school public for the present "Uniform System of Lessons," though its primary purpose was more to restrict the lessons than to render them uniform.

In the year 1827 the American Sunday-School Union began the publication of an annual series of question books that carried forward the plan of the "Selected Lesson Scheme" still further. These books, containing from 125 to 150 pages, were placed at the marvelously low price of six and a half cents a volume, and thereby obtained an immense circulation. It is said that in the year 1840 the almost inconceivable quantity of one million six hundred thousand (1,600,000) copies had been sold. Some of these question books were confined for a whole year's series of lessons to one book of the Bible; others followed the life of Christ chronologically, by a "harmony" of the Gospels. There were others of them which proposed

to take the Bible in course, taking a certain portion each year. In none of them was any analysis of the lesson published other than that suggested by the questions. As a preparatory step toward the great result we are now considering, the influence of this widely circulated course can hardly be overestimated.

In order of time, the next most important scheme of lessons, prior to the adoption of the present system, was the one devised and originated by Mr. Orange Judd, now of the "American Agriculturist." He was aided in the execution of it by Dr. James Strong and Mrs. Dr. Olin, the former selecting the scheme of lessons and writing the "Connecting History" and "Analysis," while the latter prepared with great skill the questions. These lessons were adopted by the Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the suggestion and under the secretaryship of Rev. Daniel Wise, D.D., Mr. Judd making the Union a present of the copyright. Of this series of "Lessons for Every Sunday in the Year" there were sold two million copies during the years 1862–1865. These also did good service for

uniformity until they were, in the year 1865, substituted by the "Lesson Papers" and "Berean Lessons" of that apostle of the "Uniform Lesson System," Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent. He in that year became Secretary of the Sunday-School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This leads us to turn our attention to the work of this great Sunday-school leader in Chicago, where the "Uniform System" was born.

In the year 1865 he conceived, or rather brought forth, the idea of the "Sunday-School Teachers' Quarterly," since well known in every part of the country as "The National Sunday-School Teacher." He was then a young Methodist preacher, full of warm zeal and ardent interest in the Sunday-school work, and, above all, full of clear notions as to what ought to be done, and how to do it. The world is never slow in finding out such men, and so the "Chicago Sunday-School Union" became quite willing to support him in the enterprise, and agreed to be responsible for his salary. Messrs. Adams, Blackmer & Lyon were engaged as publishers.

This publication marks the beginning of the development of a higher order of periodical literature for Sunday-schools, as well as it does a stage in the development of the "Uniform System of Lessons." We may get some notion of what the young preacher proposed by reading a part of his "Salutatory" in the first number of the "Quarterly." He says:

"We do not call for a journal merely to give publicity to our operations. We could afford to wait for coming ages to find out what we have been doing. The teacher needs teaching. The problem that perplexes one, another is able to solve. The obscure school has its ingenious and successful superintendent who devises practicable plans. There are a thousand schools in need of his suggestions. The most practicable Sunday-school ideas come from our most practical teachers. We need a magazine which shall open its pages to such teachers, and give the entire Church the benefit of their discoveries and inventions—to give *plans and courses of study*—thus enabling the least-efficient schools to know how the best are conducted. The Sunday-School Teachers' Institute, which has recently been established in our

city, will, it is to be hoped, *inaugurate a new era* in the Sunday-school cause among us."

From Gilbert's little book, "The Lesson System; the Story of its Origin and Inauguration," we take the following extract, touching the after-history of the new "Quarterly" and its progress toward a uniform system of Lessons:

"At the beginning of the following year, 1866, the Quarterly was changed to a Monthly, and named 'The Sunday-School Teacher.' A special feature of the Quarterly had been the four optional series of lessons, one of them arranged from the London Sunday-School Union, and one prepared by the editor. In the fall of 1865, in an institute held by the Chicago Union, the question was formally proposed by Mr. Vincent: 'Is it practicable to introduce a uniform system of lessons into all our schools?' The first number of the 'Sunday-School Teacher' was the cradle of the new idea.

"The invention of this Lesson Scheme referred to is one of the most notable facts in connection with the recent history of Sunday-schools. It was a fruitful seed-corn of all that has followed. It is

remarkable how many qualities it combined, and how closely all the best forms of lesson series and lesson analyses have followed it. It must have been conceived as the result of a great deal of the most observant and sagacious thinking on the part of the inventor—a kind of fruit that was well-ripened before it was picked. It was called 'Two Years with Jesus: A New System of Sunday-school Study.'"

This system consisted of twenty-four lessons for each year, each lesson being continued through two Sundays. To these lessons there were given in the "Sunday-School Teacher" analyses, notes, maps, anecdotes, and other helps. At the end of that year (1866) Mr. Vincent ceased to prepare the lessons, having withdrawn from the editorial charge of the new monthly to serve in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Sunday-School Union. He was succeeded by Rev. H. L. Hammond, and he, in turn, by C. R. Blackall. The "Teacher" then passed from the control of the Chicago Sunday-School Union into the hands of Adams, Blackmer & Lyon, and another young Methodist preacher, Rev. Edward Eggleston, was engaged as editor. He

took up the scheme of lessons where his predecessor had dropped it, and carried it forward to an almost national circulation.

Mr. B. F. Jacobs, a produce merchant of Chicago, and superintendent of the First Baptist Sunday-school in that city, seeing the excellencies of the scheme of consecutive lessons, as begun by Vincent, and continued by Eggleston, began to argue that a system which was good for all the classes in a school, and good for all the schools of a denomination, was good for all the schools of the country. Gilbert says he began to "see visions," and to "dream dreams," and we believe the allegation, for be it remembered dreaming people can walk where, waking, they would break their necks. He began to "talk up" the system at conventions and institutes. In 1868 he induced the "Standard," the Baptist paper of the West, published in Chicago, to begin the publication of weekly lesson notes, which he prepared. Going East soon after this, he urged the plan upon the "Sunday-School Times;" the "Examiner and Chronicle," of New York; the "Watchman and Reflector" of Boston;

and the "National Baptist," of Philadelphia. When he came back from the East he began to publish notes in the Sunday-school paper issued by the Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago, called "Heavenly Tidings." Then he induced Mr. Moody to introduce the plan of having the Chicago Saturday Noon Prayer-meeting take up the lesson for the following day. In May of the same year, 1868, he addressed the Illinois State Convention, and in the autumn of that year spoke to the New York State Convention in behalf of his vision of a uniform lesson system. If the reader will allow me, I will join him in wondering how Jacobs attended to his produce business during this period.

In the year 1869 the lesson system of the "Chicago Sunday-School Teacher" had attained to such a wide circulation that its name was justly changed to that of the "National Sunday-School Teacher."

Meanwhile Rev. Dr. Vincent had begun and carried forward very successfully another scheme of lessons, called the "Berean Series," which we have mentioned before. Thus matters stood when the

"National Convention" met in Newark, N. J., April 28–30, 1869. Going on to the Convention, a number of the delegates stopped to attend the meeting of the New York Teachers' Association, and the "dreamer" was there telling his dream. His spirit was contagious, and so many became infected that when the subject was presented at the Newark Convention it was received with great enthusiasm, several trying to get the floor at the same time. Many wished the matter brought before the Convention for immediate action, but Jacobs was prudent as well as bold, and opposed the action. He reported, however, from the superintendents' section, of which he had charge, the following declaration: "That a uniform lesson is essential to the highest success of every school, and that it is practicable and desirable to unite all the schools of our whole country upon one and the same series." During all the year 1869 he continued to advocate the measure, as he had opportunity, every-where.

It is said that at the beginning of 1870 as many as thirty publications, monthly and weekly, had begun to publish current lesson notes. Even Dr.

Eggleston, who had thought the plan visionary, began to lose his misgivings on the subject. He said, in the January number of the "Teacher," 1870, "That which a year ago seemed to us an impracticable dream has come to look quite possible; we mean the uniform lesson for the whole country."

At the close of the year 1870, nevertheless, the publishers of Sunday-school literature were very far apart as to a uniform system of lessons. The Sunday-school workers were close together though, and the public demand for uniformity was strong. So we see in June of this year (1870) the Normal Department Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church appointing Rev. J. M. Freeman to represent the Sunday-School Union of that Church in a consultation of publishers, looking to the arrangement of such a series. In pursuance of his appointment he issued a circular letter, requesting a conference of those parties who in his judgment had "a right to say something in reference to a series of lessons." Some responded to the call, but there was no formal organization of those who were pres-

ent, because of the failure of Adams, Blackmer, & Lyon, to agree to the plan. A free (and doubtless a useful) conversation was held upon the subject, and the meeting adjourned without having accomplished the purpose desired. The position of Adams, Blackmer, & Lyon was thus expressed: "If uniformity is so desirable, it can be secured by adopting the 'National Series of Lessons.' The 'Teacher' was first in the field, has a larger number using its lessons than any other publication, and it seems to us that other publishers of lessons ought not to expect us to come to them, but they should at once adopt our course. It is the *only way* in which uniformity can be secured." Of this, Mr. Freeman says in his report: "It was instantly seen that self-respect prevented any acceptance of the proposition made to adopt the 'National Series.' It was then proposed by several of the gentlemen present that we prepare a union series, independent of the 'Teacher,' to which your committee replied —1. That it would have the appearance of division and opposition among Sunday-school men; 2. That such an arrangement would not make a 'uniform'

lesson, inasmuch as all the publishers of Sunday-school lessons would not be represented in it; and, 3. That your committee had been instructed to arrange for *uniform* lessons, or else to make no union arrangement whatever."

In July, 1871, (a year later,) the executive committee appointed to arrange for the Indianapolis Convention of 1872 met in New York. Mr. Jacobs presented the subject of uniform lessons, and it was decided to call a meeting of publishers for Aug. 8. The "visionary" could not be discouraged by the failure of 1870, and so "by publication, correspondence, and personal solicitation, twenty-nine of the various publishers met in person or by representatives to consider the subject." "The original Jacobs" was made chairman of the meeting. By a vote of twenty-six to three it was decided to appoint a committee to select a list of lessons for 1872. Drs. Eggleston, Vincent, and Newton, Rev. H. C. M'Cook, and B. F. Jacobs were appointed on this committee. The produce merchant dreamed so hard that he seems to have been at home with either publishers or editors.

Again we draw on Gilbert's excellent little book for the further narration of the story:

"After the adjournment of this meeting the committee held a session. It was then past three o'clock, and Dr. Vincent insisted that the outline of the scheme must be formed that day. Dr. Newton said he was obliged to leave the city that afternoon. Mr. Jacobs was also obliged to leave, but said he would return the next morning. But as the other members of the committee insisted that the lessons must be selected that day, if at all, these two brethren agreed that the other members of the committee might begin the work of selecting the lessons. The three members of the committee held a meeting, and, after a brief consultation, agreed to disagree and publish the following card, which was printed that afternoon:

"UNIFORM LESSONS—THE FAILURE.—The undersigned, having been appointed at the conference held at the call of the National Executive Committee, a committee to select a course of lessons for the whole Sunday-school public, find it impossible at this late day to select a list of subjects acceptable to all, or creditable enough to put the experiment on a fair basis. The compromise necessary to effect a union at this moment renders it out of the question to get a

good list, and with the most entire unanimity we agree that it is best to defer action until the matter shall have been discussed in the National Convention.

[Signed] "EDWARD EGGLESTON,
J. H. VINCENT,
HENRY C. M'COOK.

"NEW YORK, *Aug.* 8, 1871.

"Six copies of this card were mailed *that night* to different papers for publication, and it was *almost a failure.*"

Mr. Gilbert continues:

"Mr. Lyon, one of the publishers of the 'National Sunday-School Teacher,' being still in New York at the time, and deeply interested in the matter in a business way, learning from Dr. Eggleston what had been done by the committee, or that portion of the committee which had acted, immediately telegraphed Mr. Jacobs, at Long Branch, that the committee had decided not to agree, and that Dr. Vincent had gone home to Plainfield. Mr. Jacobs telegraphed the same evening to Dr. Vincent to meet him in New York the next morning, saying, also, that the plan must not fail. Mr. Lyon, calling at Mr. Jacobs' office in New York

the next morning, showed him the card printed the night before, and asked what was to be done? Mr. Jacobs replied: 'It must be recalled, and the committee must do its work.' They went together to Dr. Vincent's office, and awaited his arrival. After an hour's discussion Dr. Vincent wrote and signed the following card, which was subsequently signed by Dr. Eggleston and Mr. Jacobs, and sent to the papers which had received the first:

"The undersigned desire to recall the circular forwarded yesterday, entitled "Uniform Lessons—The Failure." We desire to state that, having reconsidered the whole subject, we have agreed upon a series for 1872. Will you accommodate the committee by withholding the publication of the former circular? A list of lessons for 1872 will be forwarded soon.

"EDWARD EGGLESTON,
J. H. VINCENT,
B. F. JACOBS.

"NEW YORK, *Aug.* 9, 1871.

"They separated to meet after lunch at Dr. Eggleston's office. On the way down Mr. Jacobs met Mr. M'Cook, who had spent the night near by, and had returned to the city. Together they went to Dr. Eggleston's office where Dr. Vincent and Mr. Lyon soon arrived. Another discussion en-

sued, Mr. M'Cook declining any part in going forward with the work, and Mr. Jacobs insisting that the committee were appointed to do a specific work, and not to discuss whether it should be done, and they had no right to decline to proceed.

"Dr. Newton not having returned to the city, the other members of the committee, except Mr. M'Cook, made the selection of lessons for 1872, and, after many delays, the experiment was tried."

CHAPTER XV.

THE UNIFORM LESSON SYSTEM CONTINUED—THE INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION AND SUCCEEDING EVENTS.

IN April, 1872, the National Sunday-School Convention met in Indianapolis. The necessary opportunity for the complete inauguration of the Uniform Lesson System was thus furnished.

From the excellent report of the Convention, by I. Newton Baker, we take the following extract:

"The interest of the Convention culminated, as was expected, in the uniform-lesson question. To this almost every thing seemed to be tending from the beginning of the sessions. The slightest allusion to the subject created a perceptible ripple over the body. And when the question came up in the regular order, an intensity of feeling was exhibited that is rarely seen in a public assembly. At times it reached the morally sublime. After the earnest

speech of Mr. Jacobs, who had been appointed to lead the discussion, and during the brief speeches for and against which followed, the scene was indescribable. A quiver of eager desire seemed to thrill the whole body. It was known that a strong feeling in favor of the project was abroad in the Sunday-school community, but the feverish anxiety and solemnly-set purpose of such vast numbers, manifesting itself in such intensity, was hardly expected even by the most ardent and sanguine advocates of the system. There was scarcely a corporal's guard of opponents to the measure. Although in the morning, when the question was broached, repeated cries of "Question" were made, the counsel of caution prevailed, and the measure was not rushed through in hot haste, but left for the afternoon's session. The ardor of its advocates had not at all cooled by the delay, the final vote being almost unanimous, and its announcement being greeted by the Convention rising to their feet and singing the long-meter doxology. A committee of five ministers and five laymen from different parts of the United States, with one minister

and one layman added from the Dominion of Canada, were appointed to arrange a series of Bible lessons for a term of seven years, covering a general study of the whole Bible, and the Convention recommended the adoption by the Sunday-schools of the entire country of the series thus planned for."

At last the "dream" was a reality. A National Convention appointed a committee to select a seven years' course of uniform lessons. This committee was exceedingly well selected, consisting of:

J. H. Vincent, Chairman; Warren Randolph, Secretary; John Hall, Richard Newton, A. L. Chapin, George H. Stuart, B. F. Jacobs, P. G. Gillett, A. G. Tyng, H. P. Haven, of the United States; and J. Munro Gibson and A. McCallum, of Canada. Mr. Stuart afterward resigned, and J. B. Tyler was appointed in his place.

With as little delay as possible they entered upon their work, and gave to the country an eminently satisfactory course of study.

The unliturgical Protestant Churches were enthusiastic over the plan. Most of the distinctively

Sunday-school periodicals immediately adopted it. Many of the leading religious papers took up the course also, and some of them secured the services of the ablest expositors of the American continent in the preparation of the weekly analysis and comments upon the lesson.

If Jacobs took up Vincent's conception of a uniform lesson system, and carried it to a national extension, so in turn it is true Dr. Vincent pressed the national system to international limits. Indeed his heart was interested, and his hands and head were working upon this plan while Jacobs was persevering over all obstacles in bringing about the national system.

He corresponded with leading Sunday-school men of London and Edinburgh upon the subject, and in June, 1878, delivered an elaborate address in London, urging the adoption of the system. The English Sunday-schools have now fully fallen into line, the London Sunday-School Union having appointed representatives upon the Lesson Committee which was appointed at the last session of the International Sunday-School Convention, held

in Atlanta, Georgia, April, 1878. The following is the committee as at present constituted:

Rev. John H. Vincent, D.D., New Jersey, Methodist Episcopal; Rev. John Hall, D.D., New York, Presbyterian; Mr. Benjamin F. Jacobs, Illinois, Baptist; Rev. Warren Randolph, D.D., Indiana, Baptist; Prof. P. G. Gillett, LL.D., Illinois, Methodist Episcopal; Rev. Richard Newton, D.D., Protestant Episcopal; Rev. B. M. Palmer, D.D., New Orleans, Southern Presbyterian; Rev. W. G. E. Cunnyngham, D.D., Tennessee, Methodist Episcopal, South; Franklin Fairbanks, Esq., Vermont, Congregationalist; Rev. John A. Broadus, D.D., Kentucky, Baptist; Prof. H. L. Baugher, D.D., Pennsylvania, Evangelical Lutheran; Rev. James A. Worden, New Jersey, Presbyterian; Rev. D. D. H. M'Vicar, LL.D., Quebec, Presbyterian; Rev. John Potts, D.D., Ontario, Wesleyan, now Methodist.

English Committee, (appointed by London Sunday-School Union.)—Fountain J. Hartley, Esq., William H. Groser, Esq.

The system is now well-nigh universally adopted.

Wherever there are Sunday-schools it is found, both in mission fields and in nominally Christian countries. It has developed the study of the word of God more than any thing employed by the Church for centuries. It almost compels people not only to read it, but to understand it.

Upon editors and publishers it has imposed the benefit of mutual oversight and wholesome competition. It has given a new inspiration to Sunday-school teachers and pupils, and has done much to revive the drooping energies of the Church in every direction. Indeed, we might say that our homes, our pulpits, our churches, our country, our planet, have been immeasurably benefited by it.

Will it last? This is a question often asked. It is wisely answered in the following paragraph by Gilbert:

"Will the plan last always? Perhaps not; nothing in this world is a finality. Every thing depends. The perpetuity of this will depend upon its continued fitness to meet such conditions as shall continue to exist. Only a few serious blunders in the management of committees, or in the selection of

the lessons, might spoil the scheme. If it should ever be found to interfere with the liberty and spontaneity of individual schools, it will pass away. But that will not be yet awhile.

"We are now in the seventh and last year of the great experiment.* So it may be said that this lesson scheme has been fairly tested. Its success has been beyond all anticipation. But let it be remembered, we climb a stairway whose steps are forever giving way behind us; we must move on. We must presently try something new—something, if possible, still better suited to the ever-new conditions of things in these our universities of religious study."

* The first series has now been completed, and the second has been begun. The lessons in the main are well arranged and are being pursued with great zeal and success.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PRESENT CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

GOING to its source and there beginning our explorations, we have journeyed with the wanderings of the stream until it has brought us back to our own times. It would be no venture of assertion to say its increase of depth and width and power during the last one hundred years finds no parallel in the history of human institutions.

The Raikes' Centennial, to be observed this year, (1880,) will be an occasion for congratulation and thanksgiving. One hundred years ago the Sunday-schools were but the merest and simplest work of benevolence, looking chiefly to the impartation of secular truth, and one finds himself often tempted to suspect some of the founders of these schools of having more care for the preservation of their own undisturbed quietude on Sunday than interest in the children. One hundred years ago there was not

a book or paper published for the use of Sunday-schools. No great Unions sent forth men and money to establish and sustain them. The teachers who taught in them were hirelings. The houses in which they were conducted were the most clumsy improvisations. In them were no organs or music books, no maps or charts, blackboards or mottoes. The friends of the institution were few, and isolated from each other by great distances. All the teachers and all the pupils could have been comfortably seated in one of our large city churches.

To-day the enterprise is no longer a work of charity, but is sustained and operated by the best energies of the Churches in the interest of rich and poor alike. There are to-day more Sunday-school Unions in the world than there were Sunday-schools in the days of Raikes. These Unions, unlike the society presided over by William Fox, in London, not quite a century ago, have no fund out of which to pay teachers. The teachers now are rejoiced to receive only "souls for their hire," and beg the privilege of thus working in the Master's vineyard. Religious truth, and not secular information, is the

staple of their instruction. The teaching has no less an intent than the conversion of the children. For the convenience and assistance of these voluntary, consecrated teachers the most admirable rooms and furniture are provided. There are blackboards, maps, charts, and mottoes, to teach through the eye, and the most entrancing music to delight and instruct the ear. There are papers and books of every description published solely for Sunday-schools, and every-where circulated. Indeed, there has sprung up a literature called distinctively "Sunday-school literature," in the publication of which millions of dollars are annually expended and thousands of men are engaged. The friends of the enterprise are no longer "like scattered warriors in an enemy's country," but like triumphant legions coming up to possess the land of the whole world. No edifice on earth would be sufficient to furnish standing-room for the one hundredth part of the teachers engaged in the work; and if the children of the Sunday-schools of the United States alone were drawn up in line two feet apart, the column would reach from Plymouth Rock to the Golden Gate.

The number increases with each succeeding year. For the year ending March 1, 1879, the American Sunday-School Union alone established 1,087 Sunday-schools, containing 4,915 teachers and 39,769 scholars. They are springing up every-where, in Christian lands—in lands blighted by infidelity and in lands hardened by papacy. No soil has been found too parched to prevent their growth. But if this be the present condition of affairs in respect to Sunday-schools, what are the prospects of the future? We may adopt for our calculation the proverb of the fiery Virginian, and let the lamp of experience be the light to guide our footsteps.

From the past we can but draw lessons of cheerful hope. With instruments the most inconsiderable, and with appliances the most clumsy, this great result has come. There have not only been sharp conflicts and great victories, but during all the time there have been constant improvements of the implements of war. What will be the triumphs accomplished by these new and improved methods?

The work has been God's, and we know it is his method to "choose the weak things of the world

to confound the things which are mighty;" and we shall do well not to place too much confidence in the admirable machinery which we have devised.

But it is also true that where humility and conscious dependence upon God exist He honors with His blessing the efforts of the most polished intelligence and the workings of the most skillfully arranged enginery. It is infidelity and falsity to say the "victory is on the side of the heaviest artillery," but it is also presumption to trust for success without providing for the battle. It is a sinful pride and the forerunner of failure to forget God and trust to our great Sunday-school systems, but it is a duty to provide such systems, and it is rational and scriptural to expect that, other things being equal, there will be the largest and the best results on the side of the best system.

What, therefore, we ask, shall we expect for the future if this excellent system is operated with humble faith? We answer—1. The Sunday-school, as an organization, is yet to be greatly improved. As the work done in the times of Raikes was improved by the introduction of a more religious

teaching—as the hired teachers were substituted gradually by the voluntary efforts of Christians—so will the Sunday-school of the present be modified. Some of us think it is now well-nigh, if not entirely, perfect. We are one of those who think too well of the Sunday-school to entertain such an opinion. The moment it attains perfection it will begin to decay, and out of its disintegration will come forth a fairer and a more efficient enterprise. Let us not be so wedded to its present form that we shall be unable to fall in with its future changes —modifications which, perhaps, are not very far ahead of us. Let us not become so charmed with the fragrant, full-blown flower that we shall mourn its loss when it is pressed aside by its natural fruitage; and if, forsooth, the young fruit should not ripen as fast as our whimsical childishness may desire, let us not in our impatience with its acidity cast it away. Whatever changes may come about, we may be sure that in the main those changes will be in the direction of a more thorough and more vitalizing study of God's word. This leads us to say—

2. The next generation will certainly know more of God's word to teach their children than any generation that has preceded it. The international system of lessons has compelled the publication of the Scriptures every-where, even in the secular prints. Men have to walk with their eyes shut if they do not read it, and they are less than wayfaring fools if they do not understand its fundamental teaching. These facts mean two things. The first is, that this will crush infidelity. The old practice of being too ignorant of the Scriptures to do any thing but dispute them will come to an end, because there will be no audience so ignorant of the Holy Book as to believe and be interested by the unfounded assertions of its traducers. The second result will be to forever disable or reform Catholicism. Already a Reformed Catholic Church has been founded. In the light of a freely-circulated and fully-explained Bible, popish traditions, assumptions, and fictions will vanish "like frost-work beneath the sun of the tropics." Such a result may make some people conclude that their "life" is not "worth living;" but Protestantism will not be the

author of such a suicidal determination, nor will she engage to play the rôle of a mourner at the grave. She will, however, generously grant space in her cemeteries for the interment of the deceased in spite of his "heretical notions."

3. The Catholics have for these years been ringing the changes upon Protestant disunity. The use of the same passage of Scripture for the Sunday-schools of every denomination, the expositions given of the passage by the editors in the various Sunday-school publications, and the explanations presented by pastors at prayer-meetings and elsewhere, will serve to explode and expose this antiquated falsehood. And while it serves to explode the deception, it will serve also to remove any apparent ground that has ever existed for the charge. The simultaneous study of the same portion of Scripture cannot fail to develop a deeper union of heart and sympathy of thought among Protestant Churches than has ever before existed. He is both blind and deaf who, living in these times, has not seen or heard of many illustrations of this remark. This unity of heart and mind has been most con-

spicuous at the very points where it was most desirable, namely, at mission posts. It has, however, been perceptible every-where, and the Sunday-school, with its unions, conventions, institutes, and uniform lessons, has been, and is, no small factor in its production. Closer and closer the bonds of love and sympathy are drawing Protestants every day. While popery wanes, and the territory and rule of Mohammed is gradually contracting, a pure Christianity is massing its energies and armies for the conquest of the world. Conjunctions of providence and grace conspire to declare the coming day, and to draw aside the clouds which overshadow its dawn. Every day of these remarkable times begins and ends an epoch, and "visions of the world and all the wonder that shall be" rise before us without our "dipping into the future" very far. One great purpose has been running through the ages with an influence widening "with the process of the suns." Its consummation may be farther from us than we think, or it may be nearer. We can, without unseemly or groundless enthusiasm, believe and declare that we are rapidly approaching the period

when "the kindly earth shall rejoice, lapt in universal peace." When this thought comes to us—and to what thoughtful man does it not come?—we think of the words of that wise and eloquent divine, Rev. R. S. Storrs, D.D.: "When I think of the promise of a millennium in our own time, in our own civilization, my thought rests and fastens upon the promise, 'A little child shall lead them.'"

APPENDIX.

WHILE figures are not infallible, nor always the best expressions of a great work, still there are occasions when a resort to statistics is useful and desirable. Hence, for the convenience of our readers, we append here the statistical report of E. Payson Porter, Esq., Statistical Secretary of the International Sunday-School Convention. These figures may be regarded as reliable as any such compilations ever can be. We do not mean to reflect upon the supervisors or enumerators of the United States Census, but we are quite sure this report is fully as accurate as the Census tables.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

Collected under the Auspices of the International Sunday-School Convention.

ATLANTA, GA., APRIL 17, 18, 19, 1878.

United States.	Sunday-Schools.	Increase as per last International Report.	Membership. Teachers and Officers.	Scholars.	Total.	Increase as per last Internat'l Report.	Organiz'n No. Counties.	Counties Organized.	Received into Church from S. S.	Statistical or Corresponding Secretaries.
†Alabama	1,000		6,300	77,000	83,300		65			
a Alaska Ter	1	*dec.* 26	5	25	30	*dec.* 1,310	1			
†*Arizona Ter*	5	1	30	175	205	12	5			J. J. Gasper, Prescott, Arizona Ter.
†*Arkansas*	505		4,542	33,312	37,854		74			
*California	800	167	3,648	45,600	49,248	8,208	52	9		W. H. Craig, Oakland, Cal.
†*Colorado*	67	27	700	5,200	5,900	3,916	30			Richard Holme, Denver, Col.
*Connecticut	1,059	115	18,035	134,640	152,675	19,096	8	8	9,765	Jos. Tomlinson, Birmingham, Conn.
b Dakota Teb	73	25	517	2,873	3,390	1,475	86	2	40	W. S. Bell, Vermillion, Dakota Ter.
†*Delaware*	200		3,000	22,003	25,003		3			
†Dist. of Columbia	60	60	1,150	10,350	11,500	11,500	1	1		W. H. Stickney, Washington, D. C.
†*Florida*	500	253	3,423	25,079	28,502		39			John C. Eastman, Gainesville, Fla.
*Georgia	2,547	224	22,808	167,254	190,062	15,858	137	18		Rev. W. A. Candler, Atlanta, Ga.
†*Idaho Ter*	9	3	54	391	445	148	11			
*Illinois	6,244	277	63,935	465,874	529,809	43,518	102	102	19,850	E. Payson Porter, Chicago, Ill.
†Indian Ter	98	64	319	2,400	2,719	1,000	8			W. A. Welch, Caddo, Indian Ter.
*Indiana	4,089	928	40,062	323,650	363,712	79,132	92	92	5,190	F. H. Levering, Indianapolis, Ind.
†Iowa	2,659		25,384	254,682	280,066		99	50	5,895	I. H. Bunn, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.
*Kansas	1,605	697	17,655	106,304	123,959	55,835	71	42		Sandford Topping, Ottawa, Kan.
*Kentucky	2,501	125	29,436	214,121	243,557	5,920	116	32	1,166	James F. Huber, Louisville, Ky.
†*Louisiana*	1,377		13,920	96,843	110,063		57			
*Maine	1,200	140	12,000	80,000	92,000	7,000	16	16	2,000	David Cargill, Augusta, Me.
*Maryland	1,833	177	18,402	171,198	189,290	8,127	23	23	6,029	W. A. Baker, Sup't Baltimore, Md.
‡Massachusetts	1,738		30,011	270,461	300,472		14	7		Eben Shute, Boston, Mass.
*Michigan	2,198	200	19,777	145,028	164,805	14,982	79	12	1,383	Rev. Z. Grenell, Jr., Bay City, Mich.
*Minnesota	887	82	8,115	55,953	64,068	12,160	76	30	1,116	Wm. Cheney, Minneapolis, Minn.
†Mississippi	1,583		14,244	104,452	118,696		74			Wm. J. Brown, Jr., Jackson, Miss.
*Missouri	2,067	*dec.* 767	18,010	121,578	139,588	*dec.* 72,995	114	73		F. Hawes, Ch. Ex. Com. St. Louis, Mo.
†*Montana Ter*	28		169	1,243	1,412		11			
*Nebraska	958	229	6,934	42,280	49,214	14,307	64	31	783	I. P. Gage, Fremont, Neb.
†Nevada	67		411	2,928	3,339		15			A. B. Elliott, Virginia City, Nev.
*New Hampshire	600	*dec.* 103	12,120	60,403	72,523	9,190	10	7	2,286	J. G. Lane, Manchester, N. H.
†New Jersey	1,812	98	29,773	186,842	216,615	21,281	21	21	5,539	Samuel W. Clark, Newark, N. J.
New Mexico Ter	38		224	1,646	1,870		13			

*NEW YORK	5,820	*dec.* 180	99,524	808,875	903,399	91,399	60	60	25,319	Edward Danforth, Elmira, N. Y.
†*North Carolina*	1,985		17,867	131,026	148,893		93			
*OHIO	6,317	802	77,119	544,583	621,702	243,957	88	70		P. R. Loomis, Medina, Ohio.
‡Oregon	100		926	6,328	7,254		23			J. G. Glenn, Portland, Oregon.
*PENNSYLVANIA	7,789	129	105,870	754,420	860,290	58,021	66	56	30,176	E. S. Wagoner, Mechanicsburg, Pa.
†*Rhode Island*	401		5,998	43,994	49,992		5	1		
‡South Carolina	1,412		13,704	93,164	105,868		32			Rev. Wm. C. Power, Marion, S. C.
*c*TENNESSEE	2,451		22,055	161,736	183,791		93	9		
†TEXAS	2,500	2,180	10,000	70,000	80,000	64,000	172	4		L. L. Cohen, Houston, Texas.
d Utah Ter	281	263	3,388	31,197	34,585	34,110	20			
*VERMONT	650	*dec.* 58	6,855	69,145	67,000	10,437	14	11		A. M Butler, Essex, Vt.
*VIRGINIA	3,911	1,488	35,904	229,213	265,117	22,828	99		2,084	George L. Bidgood, Richmond, Va.
†Washington Ter	25	25	200	1,000	1,200	1,200	24			
‡West Virginia	1,500	479	12,500	75,000	87,500	32,150	54	5		Rev. S. B. Barnitz, Wheeling, W. Va.
‡WISCONSIN	2,454		18,094	165,925	184,019		69	5		C. M. Blackman, Whitewater, Wis.
†*Wyoming Ter*	12	8	73	660	733	539	5			A. C. Snyder, Cheyenne, Wyoming.
Totals for U. S.	78,046	8,175	853,100	6,504,054	7,357,154	813,411	2,495	787	119,921	
CANADA.										
e *ONTARIO	3,883		27,933	251,155	259,088		45	40	4,114	Rev. W. Millard, Toronto, Ont.
e QUEBEC	487		4,260	28,238	32,598		62			
f *NOVA SCOTIA	1,020		9,220	77,500	85,730		18			S. Waddell, Halifax, N. S.
f *PR. EDW. ISL'D							3			H. R. Smith, St. John, N. B.
f *N. BRUNSWICK							15			H. Snow, Annapolis, N. S.
*MANITOBA	50		270	2,950	3,220		1		136	
Totals for Canada	5,395	994	41,693	339,943	381,636	74,510	144	40	4,250	Rev. W. Millard, Gen. Sec., Toronto.
Totals for U. S. and Canada	83,441	9,169	894,793	6,843,997	7,738,790	887,921	2,639	827	123,471	E. Payson Porter, Statis'l Sec. Int. S. S. Convention, Chicago, Ill.

* (20) Sunday-School Census collated by State Association for this Convention.
† (7) Reports made by State Association to the Baltimore Convention.
‡ (18) Estimates made by persons on the field whose names are appended, or by International Statistical Secretary.
a Mrs. M'Farland, a Presbyterian missionary, has a Sunday-school at Fort Wrangle, Alaska. Atlanta Convention.
b Report of South-eastern Dakota Sunday-School Association, with estimate added for balance of Territory.
c Report of East Tennessee Sunday-School Association, with estimate added for Western part of State, approved by Rev. Isaac Emory, Missionary of the American Sunday-School Union.
d This report includes the report of "The Deseret Sunday-School Union," (Mormon.)
e Sunday-School Association of Canada.
f Sunday-School Convention of the Maritime Provinces.

NOTE ON ORGANIZATION.—Seven banner States—every county organized, (printed in CAPITALS;) thirty organized States, including South-eastern Dakota, Indian Territory, East Tennessee, and the District of Columbia, (printed in SMALL CAPITALS;) five organization doubtful, having held no State Convention since the last International Convention, (printed in Roman;) seven States and seven Territories unorganized, (printed in *Italics.*) Six States have been organized since the Baltimore Convention, namely: Dakota, Mississippi, Nevada, Texas, Virginia, and Indian Territory.

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